





INSTRUCTIVE  
AND  
CURIOUS EPISTLES,  
FROM  
CATHOLIC CLERGYMEN  
OF THE  
**Society of Jesus,**  
IN  
CHINA, INDIA, PERSIA, THE LEVANT, AND EITHER AMERICA;  
BEING  
SELECTIONS OF THE MOST INTERESTING  
OF THE  
“LETTRES EDIFIANTES.”  
WITH AN APPENDIX,  
SLIGHTLY ILLUSTRATING THE PRESENT SITUATION OF THE  
COUNTRIES DESCRIBED.

TRANSLATED  
BY THE  
REV. THOMAS AUGUSTUS POWER.

“Quæ regio in terris nostri non plena laboris?”—VIRGIL.  
“Mere reading is the best education that any one ever received.”—THE  
MARQUIS OF NORMANBY.

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TO THE  
VERY REV. DR. MEYLER, V. G.  
ETC. ETC.

THE FRIEND OF MEN OF LETTERS ;

AS A

TOKEN OF PROFOUND AND AFFECTIONATE  
RESPECT,

THIS VERSION IS INSCRIBED

BY HIS DEVOTED SERVANT,

THE TRANSLATOR.



THE  
TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

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PRESENTING such varied scenes—the gorgeous splendor of the East—the naked and natural sublimity of the West—the crowded capitals of China, and the wigwam on the wild Savannah;—those invaluable volumes, the “*Lettres Edifiantes*,” have equal, and, I imagine, irresistible attractions for the Christian, the merchant, and the man of letters. They present one of the most illustrious chapters in the history of the Church, and form one of the most glorious monuments of the Society of St. IGNATIUS. Upon the Continent their name is eulogy—without them no library is perfect—no reading extensive. The accomplished, erudite, and polished Jesuit will be always found alike instructive, edifying, and interesting, as well in the hovel of the savage, as beneath the splendid domes of Oriental majesty—in the cabin of the Red man, as in the Palaces of Pekin, and beside the “*thrones of Ind.*” Mingled with the sybarites of European courts in elegance—in exquisite delicacy, as well in moral as in physical refine-

ment, they were not to be distinguished from the most polished courtiers : they were the very men who rivalled the penitents of India in their frightfullest austerities ; they were the very men, who were worthy to carry the gonfalon of the cross to the remotest, the most distant limits of this created universe.

Their intimacy with savage life exceeded that of all other travellers. Having had the very highest education—for they themselves, reader, need I tell you, were the mightiest masters of the science—having had the very highest education, those bright intelligences, enriched with all the Greek and all the Roman gave—men to whom nothing was unknown, those gifted, elegant, and cultivated spirits, have spent 40 years among the savages. Oh, what a sacrifice was that ! they who might have shone in the courts of European kings, and eclipsed the lustre of the brightest, they have been content to accompany the red man in his dismal expeditions in pursuit of game ; they have been content to light the calumet of ever-during peace in the councils of the savage red skin ! Yes, their virtues were sufficient to win her from the skies, her habitual refuge from the violence of man, and persuade her to inhabit in the wigwam of savages !

Historians of earth have not hailed them in their annals ; they have taken little trouble to emblazon their endeavours ; but have they not been written

by the angels of heaven, and of human nature, with pencils of steel, and on tablets of adamant to outlast the world ?

Yes, a thousand, and a thousand times, human nature, suffering and degraded in the red man's cabin, has cried to heaven, in a voice louder and more penetrating than the roaring cataracts, for blessings on the heads of those friends of human nature ; and though blood-stained monarchs and their marshalled myrmidons, never heard the cry, it produced more joy in heaven, than evening trumpets sounding over fields of bloody victory ; and all who sympathise with man, wherever he is miserable—all who groan beneath the European burden of commercial tyranny, and all who feel for them, doubtless find its echo in their heart-strings. They whom they would have deified in ancient Athens, whose statues they would have placed amongst their gods, amongst the most elegant creations of the Grecian chisel, and in their loveliest fanes, have been only hunted by the howl of anti-Christian bigotry in our times. They who went forth into the forests, exhibiting the wisdom of primeval sages, to found those felicitous republics, which, embosomed by the aged oaks coeval with mankind, which swayed by true philosophers, bloomed on the savannah, have only proved in all its bitterness, " the base ingratitude of low mankind." Summon your philosophers of modern



times! have *they* done anything compared to this? True, they assisted in destroying states—did they ever found one? When did they assemble the children of the desert, and call them, like the visionary bones in the valley of the prophet, to life, and make them a community? With the “delusive Locke,” they have speculated truly on imaginary happiness, and aided in the birth of real evil, but can they boast of any thing compared to this?

They did not meet them in the prison-ships of Turkey, nor in the Bagnio of the Grand Signior: when the spirit of the pestilence breathed his samiel breath upon those dens of misery, and the serene children of Ignatius encountered the pest with calm imperturbability, like those gigantic oaks that groan amid the storm, but defy its violence, when roaring and horrent forests are strewn upon the earth by the whirlwind around them.

“Talk they of morals, oh thou bleeding love,  
The true morality is love of thee.”

But why should I traverse the remoter regions of the world, when I have a precedent at home. The Catholics of Ireland still remember Beattie; he who came to give testimony of the light—who was fit for the apostleship of the universe, and

who shone over the desert of those melancholy times, like the pillar of celestial fire over the refugees of Misraim. Oh ! hearts that have bled so frequently as ours, have suffered too much to forget him ;—suffice it to say, that the Jesuits were such as he.

As Ossian stood in the presence of Patricius, that monarch, mid a thousand bards, the companions of whose youth were all departed, the mighty men who learned from his lyre to give themselves to glory, and the colossal bard exclaimed such as I, were the gigantic Feni so We saw the last of those evangelic giants, “full of grace and truth, and he dwelt amongst us.”

They had faults, it is frequently alleged ; their solitary fault was their love of our religion. Loving her too well, labouring too well, serving her too well, “the head and front of their offending hath this extent—no more.” Hear the founder of the Presbyterian Church, the murderer of Servetus, Calvin the sodomite !

“As to the Jesuits, they are our greatest adversaries : we must put them to death, or, if that cannot be done, we must expel them : at least we must overwhelm them with *lies and calumnies*.” Jesuitæ vero, qui se maximè opponunt nobis aut necandi aut si hoc commodè fieri non potest ejiciendi aut certè mendaciis et calumniis opprimendi.—“*Mode of propagating Calvin-*

ism"—*De modo propagandi Calvinismum, apud Becun. Aphor 15.*

"Il n'y a rien de plus essential," writes a Calvinist of some celebrity in France; "que de ruiner le credit des Jesuites. En les ruinant on ruine Rome, et si Rome est perdue la Religion se reformera d'elle-meme"—"Nothing is so important as the destruction of the Jesuits; by destroying them we destroy Rome, and when Rome falls the Reformation must go on of itself."—(*Histoire du Conc. de Trente par Pierre Francois Courrayer, Amsterdam edition, 1751, page 53.*) Courrayer forgot the celebrated dictum, When Rome falls, the world will fall!\* "It is certain," exclaims Bayle, in the article Loyola, "that all that is said against the Jesuits is believed with equal certainty by all their enemies, as well Catholics as Protestants; yet, whoever examines with impartiality the innumerable apologies which the Jesuits have published, will find a justification sufficient to induce an enemy to withdraw the accusation."

We will see, in every page of the *Lettres Edifiantes*, the rich, the cultivated, the accomplished mind glowing with every variety of literature, like some fecund field which is perfectly "in heart"—like some golden mine which is perennially "crumbling away from its own intrinsic richness."

\* See Childe Harold.

Whatever faults may be discerned in the following production, credit me, reader, they are all mine; such faults are many. Few can be so conscious of those faults as I; but from an unpractised pen, tis promise, not perfection, which the judicious will anticipate.

“He who expects a faultless piece to see,” expects what never was, nor is, nor shall be; besides, the mighty truth should ever be remembered, “Nature’s great masterpiece is writing well.” Nature, in the old age of the world, gave us a Napoleon, a Watt, &c.; see you not that ’tis easier far to produce such men than to give birth to a Thucydides. In sober sadness, the vocation is so difficult, that I fear me there is less mirth than melancholy in the interrogation of the poet—

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“What sins to me unknown,  
Dipp’d me in ink, my parents’ or my own?”

From an Irish Catholic clergyman—one of the “surpliced ruffians” of the *Times*—some faults must be expected.

It may be useful to state, that I am no disciple of Loyola; would that I were worthy to loose the latchets of his shoes, let alone to be his son! The very narrow compass of my reading limits all my knowledge of the Jesuits. I believe I may safely aver, that, with a single exception, as my sight is not the best, I never saw a *live* Jesuit.





INSTRUCTIVE  
AND  
CURIOUS EPISTLES.

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A LETTER TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE THE COUNT OF  
PONTCHARTRAIN, UPON THE PRESENT CONDITION OF  
THE MISSIONS IN GREECE.

My Lord,

CONSTANTINOPLE is a universe containing an immensity of Christians. They reckon at least two hundred thousand Greeks, and the Armenians perhaps are eighty thousand, amongst the permanent inhabitants, omitting those that come and go, whom commerce and the court circulate. The plague affords a striking proof how populous this city is. I have seen, myself, two hundred thousand people mown down by the mortality. The dead that passed the portals to be inhumed outside the city, gave us the means to make this calculation. And yet the streets were as full of living people a few weeks subsequently, as if nobody had died.

Many families that inhabited the town in the time of the Genoese, are still at Pera and Galatea ; they amount

to about four hundred persons ; they are the ambassadors' interpreters ; while some are doctors, a profession from which they derive consideration, and free admission to the Turkish lords, without even excepting the seraglio.

The retinue and households of the several ambassadors and the merchants of their nations, in all almost three thousand persons, are the most distinguished of the Christian Franks. The crowd is increased by the Christian vessels, and the streets near the shore are often to be seen thronged with their newly-landed.

The Catholic slaves of Constantinople, who are working the ships, or chained to the galleys, or imprisoned in the bagnio of the Grand Seignior, are 5,000 ; there are 20,000 others in possession of his subjects. A native of Ragusa, M. R. Galani, a Dominican, and titular archbishop of Ancyra, a gentleman of great regularity of life, and who is strictly attentive to his duties, is ecclesiastical superior to all these Catholics. The situation of our house is such, that we can easily assist this population. At the centre of Galatea, near the sea, in the thoroughfare of all that come from the bottom of the harbour, appears the finest church in Turkey. The pillars that support, the balustrade that terminates the vestibule, and hems the staircase that conducts to it, these are all of snow-white marble. It possesses the prerogative of mosques, a cupola, and a covering of lead. The nave is decorated by sepulchral monuments of ambassadors of France and of Princess Tekeli ; you will find her mother's mausoleum in a separate chapel. This pious and courageous princess died at Nicomedia. To render her the services which for several years she had received at Constantinople, the

Jesuits considered it a duty to visit Nicomedia as long as she resided there. A mission had commenced at Nicomedia, which, impracticable without a plausible pretext, such as a visit to this princess, expired when the lady died.

Divine service and the sacraments, preaching, conferences, and catechism, could never be performed in Christian cities with greater freedom. The sermons are delivered in Turkish and Italian, in Greek and French. Men and women of the several rites, Armenian, Greek, and Frank, assist successively: the men are in the body of the chapel, and, in the Oriental manner, the women have a place apart, hemmed in by lattices. Though established for infants only, the Greek and Turkish catechism is of use to the old, who are always present.

Our Superior, Father Portier, a truly apostolic man, established, for every Monday, two Turkish lectures; a morning one for Armenian maids, who, in their parents' houses, pass their lives in piety, wholly consecrated to our Saviour; the other in the afternoon for many young Armenian deacons, who arm against error in this conference, and to whom the principal points of the Catholic religion, and of a priest's professional duties, are exhibited, and who will be themselves, one day, excellent missionaries when they have been made *vertabiets*, or clergymen. On Sundays, merchants congregate and compose a confraternity, which is dedicated to the holy sacrament, in which great good is done. The Latins of Pera have a society of St. Anne, which has subsisted since the Genoese; they perform pious exercises in a chapel of our church. They make a general procession

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in the open street\* on holy Saturday evening, in which they bear the relic of the holy thorn, when all Galatea and Pera are present. On Easter Sunday, the succeeding day, with the elevated cross and chanting hymns, their procession proceeds through the principal streets of Galatea. They have had this permission from the earliest period. Such Turks as they encounter are the first to pause and testify respect.—With the express permission of his majesty's ambassador, the Germans celebrate their ceremonies at our church, having no church of their own. The count Caprara, one of their ambassadors, is buried there, and there they performed the funeral solemnities of their two last emperors, in the presence of two hundred thousand persons. Such obsequies are termed by the Greeks *katarthion*, while the Armenians call them *kavaran*, meaning purgatory. The mourning, the masses, the perpetual prayers, abundant alms and funeral orations, and all we practice for the peace of the departed and the memory of princes, produced an extraordinary effect on them, and many were converted by these public proofs of our belief in purgatory. Though there are numbers of the nation in Pera and Galatea, all the noble and distinguished Greeks reside in the imperial city, or beyond the port in Constantinople, but the most distinguished dwell in the district called the *Phanal*, or Patriarchate. Some of these have issued from the ancient emperors, and others are allied to the Beys of Moldavia and Wallachia. The Scarlati, to whom that Alexander appertained who was known by the name of Mauro Cordato, by whom the

\* Had they done so in Dublin at the period, they should be dra-gooned. The Turks, it appears, were more tolerant than Irish Protestants.

lustre of its original brightness was bestowed on it, is the most distinguished at the present day. Cordato left two sons, of whom one is imperial drogouman, and the other Bey of Moldavia. We are well received of all these gentlemen. The last was taught the Latin tongue by Father James Piperi, and now requests a Jesuit to teach it to his son. We are also on excellent terms with the patriarch of the Greeks; we pay him frequent visits; he is very kind to us; he speaks his mind upon religious subjects, and, without quitting the limits of respect, we tell him what we think.

I had conceived some magnificent ideas of the majesty of this patriarch, but on my first visit I was quite surprised at seeing him served with the last simplicity. His chamber is poor and naked; his establishment consists of two valets and a few clerks. He pays visits upon foot, and in dress he no way differs from religious Greeks. He is surrounded by a few prelates, as simple as himself in their habiliments, which alone renders him remarkable. He is generally preceded by a priest or deacon, with a crutch or wooden cross ornamented with ivory and mother of pearl. I have seen him still more simply attended, with a suite of two or three persons; nevertheless, the title of Universal Patriarch is taken by this prelate without ceremony; he must not be called Most Holy Father, but Holy Panosiotatos. When the Greeks speak of their other prelates, they do not say as we do, bishop or archbishop, but the *Saint* of such a city, as the Saint of Heraclea, &c.

The good understanding that we keep up carefully with the patriarch and prelates of the Greeks, gives the people a tendency to hear us. The children are sent with

; willingness to our schools and catechistical instructions.

A Bey of Wallachia has sent his sons to us. I know a number of Greeks in Constantinople, whose dispositions are the best, but it is not in this city, speaking generally, that vast conversions can be hoped for.

Melancholy, humiliating, prostrate though it be, the sight of their ruined grandeur inflames the spirits of these fallen people with patriotic feelings of a lofty nature, which you must perforce commiserate and sympathise with. You would easily suppose that the city was still their own. Though they do not understand their Holy Fathers, and diurnally depart even farther from their doctrine, or give it the most pitiable explications, they will not admit that they are better understood by the Westerns, nor that the latter come from the ends of the earth to indicate the real meaning. I have often been told by a virtuous Greek, the most intellectual amongst them, with a naivetè I never shall forget, that in order to conversion, the Greeks required poverty and humiliation. "Heaven who knows us well, and wished to save us," he continued, "hath made us quaff the 'cup of trembling' for 300 years. Our wealth and splendour in the ancient times had ruined us. I am very much afraid lest a certain vapour in the head that still remains to us, complete not our destruction."

The Armenians are not in a safer way, nor better doctors than the Greeks, but are much more docile, and have more anxiety for information. It is not sufficient, as in France, to speak of religion for an hour. After two or three hours of continual attention, they are ready to listen for as long again, and invariably complain that we are too compendious. Thirty or forty of their families

who are famous for their rank, exhibit a degree of fervour worthy of the early ages of Christianity.

The parents, the children, and even the domestics respire nothing but charity and zeal for God's service. The heads of some of these families, who, for the faith, have lost their property, deem it an insult if you pity them. What do you talk of, they exclaim; is not our Saviour's word explicit—he who shall lose his life and all for Jesus Christ, shall find them in the Lord. Nothing can be possibly more edifying than to see these virtuous men, surrounded by their children, married and not married, approaching the altar every eight days, and after them their spouses, in the middle of their daughter's. They perform this devotion with such modesty and fervour, that your soul cannot fail to be affected by it.

Were we not obliged to portion out our time amongst other indispensable employments, the seven days of the week would hardly be sufficient to content the avid piety of these good people. He who has received the rarest talent for the salvation of Armenian souls, is Father Jacques Cachod, of Fribourg, in Switzerland. Before his dedication to the missions of the Levant, and during the recent war, he was for many years a missionary at Fribourg, in Brisgau. Numbers of our officers who still survive did him the honour of their confidence, and in his hands it was that the celebrated M. du Faï desired to die. This father, in a single year, convinced 400 schismatics, and heard the confessions of 3000 persons, and there have been twice as many schismatics converted in the year just passed. His maxim is seldom to appear, and instantly to act. He has several zealous and sagacious Catholics constantly at hand, who spread themselves

on every side, and who conduct persons, who are inclined to conversion, in silence to the priest. Several priests and orthodox vertabiets exceedingly contribute to maintain the faith. These are the overseers of their nation, ever ready to run where their services are necessary. Since justice was inflicted by the Grand Seignior on the sanguinary Ali Pacha, whose death was regarded by the Turks themselves as a necessary penalty of his persecuting the Armenians, the tranquillity of the catholics in this quarter has seldom been interrupted. The blood of the Armenian Dergoumidas\* seems to have extinguished the fire of persecution. There are only now and then some transient efforts by the heretics which solely serve to purify the virtue of the faithful.

If all Constantinople may be credited, the graces received by the intercession of Dergoumidas every day make his memory rise in the veneration of the people. The spirit of faith which seems to have assumed new vigour in the breasts of the Armenians, despite the bloody persecution they have recently endured, is most commonly attributed to his mediation. Far from annihilating our religion, as the Mahometans anticipated, the violent tempest by which it has been visited hath caused it only to send forth new shoots and fructify more generously.

The Catholics of Constantinople have increased by one half; their number is about 12,000. They increase in other cities in a like proportion. Messire Melchior a pupil of the Propaganda, bishop of Mardin in the Diar<sup>bek</sup>, a very virtuous and learned prelate, has almost made his

\* This holy priest was condemned to death by the Vizer Ali Pacha the 5th November, 1707.



diocese entirely catholic. It has occasioned him, it is true, penalties and perils without number ; but he triumphed over these, and succeeded in the end. Last year he had the courage, in order to consolidate his edifice, to repair to Constantinople to ask the Vizier for a firman which should protect his people and his person from the persecutions of the Pacha of Mardin. Not finding any one who was willing to risk his safety by the pleading of so delicate a cause, he proceeded to the full divan to state his case himself, and such efficacy was given to his eloquence, that it was publicly decided by the Grand Vizier, that the Pacha of Mardin had ceased to reign, and that he should be put in prison till his peculations were refunded.

Our missionaries are much employed in attending to the slaves in the bagnio of the Grand Seignior at Constantinople. Its name is derived from the Italian of a bath, and it really contains one. Girt with strong and lofty walls, the bagnio is a vast enclosure, which has but a solitary entrance, for ever furnished with an armed guard. Imagine in the middle of this vast enciente, two great square buildings, one less than the other, of which the great is called the larger and the little is the smaller bath. The light comes in through iron bars of no small thickness, which compose the windows, and are at a great elevation from the ground. The Christians taken by the Turks in war or in ships at sea are incarcerated here. The officers have little cells where two or three reside together ; the commoner prisoners sleep uncovered on a wooden guard bed which skirts the walls, where each has only space sufficient for his body. They have contrived a double chapel in a portion of the bath, one for the

slaves of the ritual of Rome, the other for the Greek rite. Each of these chapels has its altar and its poor and scanty ornaments apart. They had some good bells at one time, but six years since they were taken from them by the Turks, as the angels had their slumbers broken by these bells, they said, who, alighting nightly on the summit of a neighbouring mosque, sought repose upon the cupola.

A little church dedicated to St. Anthony, sufficiently well supplied with altar furniture, and which even has some plate, has been built by the donations of the faithful, very near the smaller bath. This is the church of the ailing and the officers. Annually, a prefect of the bagnio is elected by the slaves, and a sacristan underneath him, to whom all the articles are reckoned out, to be transmitted in the same condition to the persons who shall succeed them. Chains are attached to the person of the slaves even in the bagnio—chains that never are removed. Early in the morning, they are led along the streets to the arsenal or public works, chained together two and two in troops of thirty or forty, and this on every day in the year, the four solemn festivals excepted. For all his nutriment, each slave has two black loaves a-day, the quality of which is bad. The Turks bring their slaves back at sunset, but those who have satisfied their overseers are separated from each other, and go one by one. Those that they desire to punish are left enchained, which occurs before they quit the works; then a cry is raised to return to the bath. They no sooner return and are reckoned, than the keepers secure them with a double lock, till the succeeding morning. When they are sick, they cannot be removed from the

bagnio ; they remain in the prison with their gyves upon them, which are only taken off when they are corpses. However, Turkish cruelty is not limited by death. Before they are carried to the public cemetery, the corpses are arrested at the great portal ; there they lie extended, side by side, while they are pierced repeatedly from belly to belly with long iron spits, in order to be certain that existence is extinguished.

The service that we render these unhappy people consists in assisting them in sickness, procuring them the solaces which charity affords them on the part of the faithful, keeping up their faith and fear of God, and aiding them to die well. If we are necessarily involved in much pain and subjugation, in this labour, consolations on the other hand are attached by Heaven to these services. Besides our visits in the week, on sabbath days and festivals, two jesuits attend them. In the evening they go there, and during that night they are imprisoned with the slaves. The Father of each bagnio has a little nook apart, whither he retires when no sick are to be visited. Imagine all those victims in their gyves, and the father watching over them. When this multitude of sufferers have taken some repose, and have ate their little bread, the signal is given for the prayer. We begin by blessing water and by a general aspersion. The prayer is then repeated in a lofty voice : the five points of the examen and the act of contrition are reiterated by the people and the priest. Next he makes an exhortation on some touching subject which is closely connected with their present disposition, and this for the space of half an hour. Then he spends some hours in the confessional, and unless he have to watch some dying man, having finished the

confessions he reposes for a moment. At five o'clock in winter, and at three o'clock in summer, all the inmates of the prison are awaked for mass, at which the priest explains the gospel. The mass concluded when the communicants return thanks, he takes his stand beside the chapel door, and distributes alms to every one that passes. Then the gates are opened with a great explosion, and every slave makes haste to place himself beside a fellow, in order to get chained to him, and, Sunday though it be, they thus proceed to labour.

When the pestilence prevails, as the priest must be always at the elbow of the sick, and the number of the missionaries is never more than five, the portal is passed by a solitary jesuit, who seldom repasses it alive ; but who devotes himself entirely to the service of the sick, and remains in the bagnio while the pestilence prevails. When this priest has obtained the superior's permission ; being prepared by a previous retreat he bids a final farewell to his brothers, as if he were about to die ;—sometimes he escapes the danger. The last Jesuit who died in this exercise of charity, was Father Vandermans, a Belgian by nation. The pest was very violent at that time. The multitude of sick he assisted infected him in less than fifteen days. He apprised his superior immediately, asking as a favour the permission to expire near his brothers. There is a little habitation situated at the extremity of our garden, whither we transported him, and having confessed himself anew, as well as taken the viaticum, replenished with a sweet and quiet joy, he died full of gratitude to God for the signal favour thus bestowed on him. No one has been stricken by this mortal malady since, save Father Peter Besnier, whose

fine and brilliant genius made him so well known. Towards the termination of his days, he consecrated his existence for the second time to the mission of Constantinople, to which he had already rendered services the most essential. He was hearing the confession of a patient when he became the victim of the plague. The other priests of this mission were preserved by Providence; for it was only when the father had expired that the signs of the pestilence appeared, and during the continuance of his illness they had been perpetually with him.

But if any one should die of this disease, it is Father Jacques Cachod, of whom I have already spoken; who is known by the name of the father of the slaves, he has been employed for the last ten years in all such works of mercy as are imminently perilous; sometimes in the bagnio and sometimes in the galleys of the Grand Seignior. As they have an understanding with their keepers, the slaves, who never can go out, contrive to get him in. I received the following letter from this father; I was at Scio when he wrote; 'twas a season when the scourge was so appalling, that a third of the citizens were stricken dead in Constantinople.

Now a day I am placed superior to the terror which contagious maladies inspire, and after the dangers I have run with the help of heaven, I shall never die of diseases of these kinds. I've emerged this moment from the bagnio, where I have closed the eyes of eighty persons, who are all that died in three weeks' time in a place so exceedingly decried, while in the city, in the open air, thousands perished. I was unvisited by horror in the day light; it was only in the darkness, in the little sleep

allowed me, that frightful ideas filled my mind. The greatest danger which I ever ran or ever shall perhaps, was in the hold of a Sultana of two and eighty guns. The slaves, in concert with the keepers, had introduced me in the evening, to hear confessions in the night, and to celebrate the service in the morning. We were all, as usual, secured with double padlocks. During that tremendous night, I heard the confessions and administered communion to two and fifty slaves, of whom twelve were sick, and of whom three expired before I left the hold. There was no aperture whatever to this crowded dungeon; so you may suppose that the air was insalubrious. Well I know that God will save me from many other dangers, since he delivered me from that.

I fear, my Lord, that I have trespassed on your patience with these trifling details. I intended their suppression, but they told me that your Lordship loved such minutiae. I shall only add, that were there fifteen jesuits instead of five, we should find for them more work in Constantinople than they could perform.

In Smyrna, there are only four of this society, of whom two are more than eighty, and yet Smyrna is a mission where the spiritual harvest is of great abundance. Father Verzeau, the superior, it is true, does quite as much as many missionaries.

In a handsome street, which is half a league in length, reside the consuls of England, France, Venice, Holland, and Genoa, with the merchants of their several nations; it is called, on that account, the street of the Franks. There are 20,000 Greeks in Smyrna, while the Armenians may amount to 7,000. The former are not quite such impracticable people as in Constantinople. We



entertain an amicable intercourse with the principal persons of the city. They bring us their children, that we may mould them early to letters and religion. Including their clergy, many make confessions to us, and frequent our church as freely as the Latins. The Armenians are much the same as in Constantinople ; but the tone of such as are heretical is more subdued. The Consul of France, M. Fontenu, is able to confine them in the limits of respect. There are many very regular and fervent Catholics among the Armenians, many merchants of Persia, amongst others ; especially those from the province of Nakivan, a district which Dominicans have cultivated for four hundred years : almost all the people of the province have embraced the Latin rite.

At the arrival of the caravans, which are commonly very numerous, and which travel three or four times a year, the eagerness with which the Catholics approach the sacraments is a source of solace and delight. Our house and church are sometimes so replete with these travellers, that no one else can get admission. At Christmas and Easter, the presence of a priest is required at Guzzel Hissar, a town built upon the ruins of the old Ephesus, as well as at Thyatira, and at other places where commerce congregates Armenians. The father never fails to make a convert upon these occasions. We shall extend these missions to many cities of importance in the vicinity of Smyrna, when we shall have more missionaries. Were it possible for one of us to travel with the caravans, we should gain many souls to God upon the road.

Smyrna may be considered as being an annexation to the missions of the Levant. Those interminable gradens



that surround the town are almost exclusively the property of Christians, Greeks, and Latins, from the isles of Scio, Naxos, Paros, Santorin, &c., all susceptible of information, and who knew us in their native isles. Poverty expatriates a multitude of females, who repair to Smyrna from the isles of Greece; it being an opulent emporium where every thing abounds. All the ardour and zeal of the missionary, and all his sleepless vigilance, are scarce sufficient to restrain this multitude within the limits which Christian severity prescribes.

The town of Smyrna is smitten sometimes with pestilences, so appalling, and such furious earthquakes, that they pale the cheeks of persons the least susceptible of fear. Two years ago, the town was emptied of 10,000 persons, and the maladies they left behind them were as dangerous as pest. However, as the Catholics were cautious, very few of them were smitten. The only one with whom the malady was mortal was Messire Daniel Duranti, their bishop. He was a good prelate, and more than eighty years of age, and his amiability and virtue were such, that he was universally regretted.

As to the earthquake, you neither can foresee it nor secure yourself against it; it may surprise you in the night as well as in the day: It comes so suddenly sometimes, that your only resource is to purify your conscience and put your trust in God. In the middle of the summer, if the sea be very calm, it is said to be a certain forerunner of the earthquake; it has shook the earth however, when the sea was greatly agitated, in my own experience; and when it was as smooth as glass for days together, no earthquake followed.

The total destruction of the town of Smyrna, in 1688, was occasioned, 'twas imagined, by the mighty masses of stone of which the houses were constructed, which having no elasticity to suit the series of joltings to which they were subjected, the earthquake entirely overturned them. In rebuilding the city, they have remedied this inconvenience. The first story is of stone to fifteen feet or so, but all the superior part is interwoven wood; they employ baked clay in which a little lime is mingled, with which to fill the interstices. Earthquakes have since occurred that have agitated everything, making the universal city dance and shiver with much more furious and violent concussions than in 1688, when Smyrna was destroyed. The houses have been sadly shaken, but scarcely any of them fell.

The city is situated at the basis of a mountain, which confronts the whole breadth of the bay, whose entrance is protected by a little fortress at four leagues' distance from the town. Creditable persons have informed me, that when the town was overturned, the agitation of the earth came from the direction of the deep and from under the sea, which, as it advanced, it caused to bellow, boil, and roar with a loud and horrible noise, and so causing the fortress to fall before the city. On the anniversary of this disaster, the memory of which makes the citizens of Smyrna tremble, they observe a solemn fast, and expose the blessed sacrament. There is invariably a great congregation at this festival, and numerous communicants surround the altars. The superior of this mission at the period, Father Francis Lestringant, whom they drew from underneath the ruins of his house, apparently a corpse, always implores permission, though he is very old,

to preach the sermon of this anniversary. No man has a better right to know, he says, the nature of the matter than himself, and few can be fuller of the subject.

Our house and church have been rebuilt, and are much more spacious and commodious than they were. For this we are indebted to the gentlemen of the chamber of commerce of Marseilles, to whom the Jesuits owe many obligations. The church is very neatly and even elegantly kept : Sermons are delivered in four languages on sabbath days and festivals. After the last mass, instructions are given in the Greek in the court yard of the chapel to the poor of the city. After these instructions, the alms are distributed amongst them, which the father never fails to procure them in the previous week. The father explains the Christian doctrine to groups of Grecian girls, who assemble with their servants at one o'clock on Sundays.

We have a fervent fraternity of merchants, moreover, known by the name of the conception of our Lady. They assemble upon Sundays with an assiduity and devotion which edify the city. The prefect and the merchants make donatives profusely, for the redemption of the slaves and the solace of the poor.

There is no bagnio for the slaves at Smyrna ; nevertheless, four gallies spend the winter in the bay. They seldom suffer any one to go on board to administer the rights of religion to the Christian slaves. It is only by the dint of importunity, and sometimes by administering a bribe, that these people get permission to repair in their shackles to the church, with their drivers behind them, who never lose sight of them. But then we visit and instruct the sailors who cannot come to land in the merchantmen of France and Italy, and teach the cabin-

boys their catechism ; persons who have seldom made their first communion, though they are often more than fifteen years of age.

For the renewal of our mission in Thessalonica, one of those which we cultivated anciently, we are deeply indebted to your Lordship's sedulity in sending jesuits as chaplains to the consuls of France, by which an illimitable field has been opened to their labours.

Thessalonica is one of the greatest and most famous towns of European Turkey. Like Constantinople, it has an *Eptapyrgion* or seven-towered castle. The Greeks are numerous in Thessalonica, and the Armenian merchants are many in the city ; yet all these Christians scarcely make 10,000 souls, while the Jews are nearly 12,000 in number. The last are said to be exceedingly industrious. Two several viziers took it in their head, some time since, to make these Israelites imitate our cloth manufactures, to render Turkey independent, as they said, of other countries ; but whatever expences they have gone to, or trouble they have taken, they have never been able to succeed. During the seven years he has been here, Father Braconnier has won golden opinions from the Greeks by his amiable manners, and his singular talent in convincing them of the folly of their errors in a friendly way. The Armenians likewise receive the pious impressions which he makes upon their minds with astonishing plasticity. As the current of their commerce continually carries them from country to country, as they are a people perpetually moving, he has the opportunity of successively instructing a considerable number. They make use of the chapel of the merchants of France. French society is not very numerous at Thessalonica, but it is

exceedingly select. Mr. Boesmont the consul, is respected and beloved. Supported by the credit of the Count des Alleurs, ambassador at the porte, his continued representations have induced the Grand Seignior to allow a public chapel to him and his nation. Of the two missionary jesuits, one constantly remains for the service of the chapel, the other goes at Easter to la Cavalla and Scopoli, where there are vice-consuls and several other Frenchmen, but no one to administer the sacraments to them. Scopoli is a populous and pleasant isle, fifty leagues from Thessalonica. It is the principal of many which compose an archipelago on the coasts of Macedonia.

La Cavalla is a Turkish fortress which derives its name from the figure of a horse, which the rock on which it stands is thought to resemble ; it lies 30 leagues by land north-eastward of Salonica, but 'twould be 100 by sea, the route is so circuitous. Thasso is perceptible from La Cavalla, a very handsome island, which is 30 leagues in circuit. I suspect it to contain 8,000 souls, which are divided into fifteen villages. Missioners are civilly received in all these places, which have been visited repeatedly by Father Braconnier. He has sojourned for a time in the monasteries of Mount Athos,\* Negrepont, and Lemnos, and in all these places, the fruits of his labours have been abundant. Nothing more is necessary save zealous and laborious missionaries to make the islands

\* How blest the life of godly eremite,  
Such as on lonely Athos may be seen,  
Watching at eve upon the giant height  
That looks o'er seas so blue, skies so serene,  
That he who there at such an hour hath been  
May wistful linger on the hallow'd spot,  
Then slowly tear him from the witching scene  
Sigh forth one wish that such had been his lot,  
Then turn to hate a world he had almost forgot.

on these beautiful and extensive shores amazingly prolific. Father M. Piperi, in his turn, has made excursions to the Greek inhabitants of Olympus, and to the environs of Pelion and Ossa. Between these two mountains, the river Peneus flows, which forms, while meandering, the vale of Tempe. Wherever he proceeded, the people whom the priest discovered were of gentle dispositions ; but with reference to religion they were perfect savages. Were there more of us in Greece, we should establish a mission to Scopoli, where the people of the isle are anxious to possess us, and where the generous nature of the fruitful soil wins Frenchmen to reside who live and die without religious aid. We could, a second time, establish that mission at Negrepont, which the war of Venice and the frequent pest, and the want of priests, compelled us to relinquish till we should meet conjunctures more propitious. True it is, that the plague successively deprived us of six of our society, whose merits might not easily be paralleled, and whose memory is still in benediction in the country.

But by attending to the town in winter, in which we have a house and chapel, and by visiting the villages in summer, in which, while raging in the town, the malady is seldom prevalent, the mission might escape destruction. There are nearly 200 villages in Negrepont, and its circuit is 100 leagues. There is nothing to prevent us from passing, when we please, to the main land of Macedonia, which is very near the isles where the fields are full of Christians, having nobody to tell them of the things of God in a proper manner. Larissa alone, though a solitary canton, would occupy two jesuits during half the year. It is next to Thessalonica, the most frequented



town in these districts and one to which Christian strangers commonly resort.

The isles of Thassos, at the other extremity of Macedonia, on the northern side, would likewise be a very proper station for missions, which could be made with ease into the part of the province that approaches Thrace, which is equally populous and quite as fine, and where Frenchmen are received with more civility than in any other part of Turkey. They regard the Venetians as people who have recently been reconciled, with whom they have peace to-day but war to-morrow; while the French are considered as perpetual friends, who, time out of mind, have been only known by traffic, and benefits bestowed upon the country. With your protection, I expect, my Lord, and from our missionaries' zeal I presume to promise, that this illustrious province, Macedonia, the name of which alone awakes in the soul such lofty associations, will speedily resume that ancient fervour, at least in some measure, which was lighted by the labours of St. Paul, and by his epistles to the Thessalonians and Philippians.

Scio is a mission which your Lordship, in like manner, gave existence to, in which, but for you, the Catholic religion were annihilated. Venice extended her invading arm over the territory of this isle in 1691, and then, relinquishing her hold, left it to the mercy of a Turkish army, who, on their return, committed the most horrible disorders. Some malignant Greeks accused the Catholics of Scio of having invited the Venetians. The assertion was sufficient to rouse the ferocious fury of the Turks. All the rabid rancour of their animosity was directed, like a stream of scalding lava, upon these shrinking and

defenceless victims : churches were levelled with the ground, made into mosques or given to the Greeks ; their dwelling houses gutted, and their most precious property divided between the Greeks and Turks, the plunderers. Such complete and howling desolation no one ever saw before.

For upwards of a century the jesuits had held a college and a church at Scio, from which the public derived no inconsiderable advantages. As at the approach of the fleet despite reiterated solicitations from Constantinople, and the disheartening example of the clerics who precipitately fled the island, the Jesuits did not wish to fly, our church and dwelling house remained erect, while many others were devastated. The Seraskier, or general of the Turkish army, Oglo, bestowed praise on these priests for their firmness and constancy, and gave them a guard of soldiers for their security till the effervescence of invasion had subsided ; but the Greeks, to deprive the Latin ritual of every resource, breathing fiery wishes for its extirpation, worked their way so well by means of money, that persons approached our house a few days afterwards for the purpose of setting fire to it. The roof of our church came down immediately. With one hand the fathers were dragged from their chambers by infuriated soldiery who wounded them with the other. When the walls were naked, the college and the church were presented to a Turk who made them a caravanserai, or house of hire. A prohibition, under pain of death, of professing the religion of the Pope, was published in the city, and the Latins were enjoined to pray in the churches of the Greeks. A document was dispatched to the Grand Seignior, which informed his highness that there were no longer any

Franks at Scio, as coercion had turned them into Greeks. Nevertheless, though solicited on all sides, the Jesuits could not be induced to quit the island and forsake 5,000 Catholics, who, in these disastrous times, had no one in the world to console them but themselves. As their habit was prohibited, they assumed a different apparel, and went from house to house administering the sacraments and saying Mass, exhorting the faithful to die a thousand deaths rather than permit their faith to be affected. A single circumstance will show how firm they were, and how resolute to suffer. To cry down the Latin ritual for ever, and to diffuse terror through the Franks, the schismatics requested and procured, by proffering gold, the death of four distinguished Catholics, of whom two were of the house of Justiniani. These four nobles, who could be reproached with nothing but their creed, and were the worthiest characters in Scio, proceeded to the scaffold with the utmost cheerfulness, rejecting, with a firmness which was altogether Christian, the establishments which were offered them on condition that they would change their creed. The day after their death, their ladies conquering their timidity, and summoning resolution, proceeded to the Seraskier, with their children by the hand. Drowned in sorrow as they were, they addressed him in a tone of voice that did not tremble in the least :—"Yesterday you caused our Lords to die because our spouses were Catholics; do as much at present for these innocents and for us, as we too are Catholics, and determined never to change our faith." The Seraskier himself was affected by this spectacle: gold embroidered handkerchiefs were distributed by his orders to the ladies, and he said to them, in accents of compassion,

“Impute not to me the destructions of your husbands, but to them,” and he pointed to the Grecian Primates.

Matters remained in this melancholy state for almost a year, when the envoy of the King at Constantinople, M. de Castagneres, moved by the sufferings inflicted on so many faithful Catholics, and the danger incessantly menacing the missionaries who risked destruction in assisting them, sent to the Sieur de Ryan, the consul of the King at Smyrna, to despatch his vice to Scio, to whom he should appoint Father Martin, of the society of Jesus, as chaplain. 'Twas his object to open an asylum to religion by the countenance which a French chapel should afford it; and by the assistance and support which the Jesuits should receive from one of their society, over whom the Turks had no authority to procure them freedom for their ministry. My Lord, you were so good as to second this proposal on receiving the request which the ambassador presented you, and moreover by letters patent of the King, expedited to the Jesuits, it pleased you to confirm it. We may venture to assert, that, next to providence, 'twas this that saved the catholic religion in the isle of Scio! Such a multitude of people, above all the poor, could never have withstood assaults so violent for any length of time: some began to stagger, half seduced already; others left the isle, and things would have returned to the same condition as in the neighbouring isles, where the Latin rite, though paramount at one time, is now extinguished. But thanks to your piety, My Lord, and his Majesty's protection, no sooner did they see a chapel open under the auspices of France, than they ceased to think of any other church. The eagerness with which they hurried to hear the word

of God and to receive the sacraments, is quite incredible. Besides the public and ordinary prayers for you and for the King, particular prayers in private families have been instituted, which, for twenty years, have never been omitted.

If the Latins were delighted to see the consul's chapel supply the places of their fallen churches, the schismatics considered the circumstance with animosity. They saw the portal opened for the re-establishment of the ritual of Rome, which, as they believed, was dead and buried. Incarceration, burdensome taxation, ceaseless citation to the presence of the judges, calumnies and accusations, nothing was omitted to weary out the patience of the miserable Latins, or disgust them with the exercise of their religion. They even went to such extremities as to solicit urgent orders of the Grand Signior for their banishment to Brussus, as dangerous people who could not be left in a place so exposed as Scio with security. Whether exile was commuted for pecuniary penalties, or that these orders were issued in reality, as was then the belief, 14,000 crowns were extorted from the Franks, excluding the *avaries* they had paid already. With all this cash, they could not purchase peace: snares were laid by their malicious adversaries for their "unblest feet;" among which the most insidious was to entrap them into an avowal, in a court of justice, that they kept up a constant connexion with the pope. You know that the Pope is held in abhorrence by the Turks, who deem him more inimical to Mahometanism than all its other foes. But his holiness was hated at Scio more heartily than any where else; for his gallies had been seen assisting and mingling with those of the Venetians, when their

armament assaulted the island. Profiting maliciously by this contingency, the schismatics hugged the hope of overwhelming the Catholics, by compelling them to a public juridical confession. With great expense and much intriguing, they contrived to cause a general assembly of the agas of the isle and of the people of the law, who were to congregate before the cadi. The leading persons of the Latin families, the Jesuits of Scio, the vicar-general, who, with some of his clergy, had recently arrived, were all cited to appear. But the egis of heaven was extended over innocence, and iniquity was overwhelmed with confusion. Distinguished Turks, their former friends, informed the Franks in a secret manner, that for them it would be highly dangerous to talk of the pope in this assembly ; that, in a word, his name would be the signal for their extirpation. They profited by this advice. The cadi could extort no other answer: turn them what way he would, and however cunningly he questioned them, save that their King was his christian majesty, and they repeated perpetually that they repaired to his chapel to pray to God ; that their mode of faith and pious exercises differed in nothing from the King's, and that the chief of their law and the religion they professed were precisely the same as his. These questions continued for an hour, during which it was impossible to elicit any thing but this. At length a friend of the Franks, a commander of a galley, who was laughing in his sleeve at their manœuvring, rising up, exclaimed, " I shall always put more trust in those who believe as the Franks believe than in fellows who follow the faith of the Muscovites ;" designating the Greeks thereby, who were obliged to be silent, though stung to



the inmost core. Their project proved abortive : there was no judiciary document drawn up, and having given in a hundred crowns, the Latins were discharged. Nevertheless, our persecutors were relentless still, and for four years and a half their fury raged with unabated vehemence. Weekly they discovered some new source of terror and vexation, and still during this season of suffering, none of those cenobites returned whom the first rupture of the storm had dispersed to the four winds. Sustaining in their solitary strength so many people, and such difficult contingencies, like the "oak laden with stormy blasts," no one can do justice to the sorrows and fatigues of Father Martin and his brether Jesuits. It caused the death of two of them. viz. Fathers Ignatius Albertin and Francis Ottaviani. The voice of God at length rebuked the winds, and there came a great calm : things were re-established on their ancient footing, and one by one the friars alighted upon the shores. They were all received by Father Martin with the utmost joy and gratulation in the chapel, as in the common church of the Roman Catholics. Ever since that happy day, nine or ten masses have been said diurnally, as well high as low, accompanied by an uninterrupted course of confessions and communions.

The divine office and diurnal preachings, congregations of the confraternity of the Virgin Mary, composed of upwards of 500 persons, the forty hours, and the exposition of the blessed sacrament : under the sanction of the Sovereign's name, are all performed with an ardour and a concourse which serve to revive the radiant recollection of those palmy days when our Catholic religion was in flower.

To supply, to the best of our abilities, the breaches in our college ranks, the fathers Stanislaus d'Andria and Antonio Grimaldi, have individually opened two well-attended classes, and the sons of the most inimical Greeks are as sedulously sent thither as are those of the Latins. The perseverance of the priests to mould their pupil's minds, is quite as much undiminished as before they had suffered such inhuman persecution at the hands of their parental relatives. The public are probably much edified at this, and haply look upon it with as much admiration as at any of their former toils. Although experience should have taught them how unrelaxing the tenacity of the attachment with which Roman Catholics adhere to their religion, and though the delusion was no longer tenable of shaking the persecuted people in their creed, their tormentors were untiringly and diligently busy in disturbing them, as well as in imagining all manner of means that might coerce them to relinquish their religion. Their darling object was to melt their substance, as it were, upon a slow fire, to reduce them to ruin by continual expenses caused the Catholics upon all occasions. A new pacha or a new cadì never yet arrived at Scio, without levying an avany on the Latins, now under one pretext and now under another. The most ordinary pretext is afforded by religion. On the arrival of those officers, preparations are immediately made by the Catholics to pass some time in prison and in irons. Two years ago, the persecution was pushed farther. Four chiefs of the first families, and with them Father Stanislaus of Andria, laden with gyves, were flung into a galley which carried them to Rhodes. 'Twas after an agony of four months, and a fine of a hundred crowns, that the

sufferers were permitted to return. When these good Catholics arrived, I was in the isle of Scio, and I saw them, on their landing, pale, meagre, and attenuated, when their object was not to see their families, but to hasten to the church, and on their knees to thank the benignant deity, with their foreheads on the floor, for his mercy in having deemed them worthy of suffering a little for the glory of his name. The Latins of Scio have made many applications to the Porte, requesting a judicial trial, and imploring to be punished should they be found guilty, or their innocence declared if nothing could be proven. Ali Pacha, the fiercest of the late Viziers, to whom they had the courage to address themselves, sent them away with gentle words, such as scarce might be expected from a man so rude. Two years subsequently they received some services from Numan Kaprogli, but so short was the vizierate of this Pacha, he could not carry out his purposes.

It is a prevalent impression, that religion will never be established at Scio, with solidity, unless by the intermission and authority of France; and if any Latins of the Levant deserve this intervention, it is assuredly those of Scio, as well by their sincere attachment to the nation, as by their inclinations, which are altogether French. Their number is perennially augmenting in spite of persecutions. It amounts to something more than 7,000 souls at present. Like the captive Jews, they seem to be passed over by the pestilence, which scourges Scio as often as the other provinces of Turkey. Every year it only deprives them of a few, while the Greeks and Turks are slain by hundreds. Earthquakes commonly occur at Scio. Our chapel is a wide and lofty hall; three solid

vaults, side by side, which buttress one another, sustain it. During the celebration of our sacred mysteries, I have often seen it shiver from the summit to the ground, and yet no accident occurred, though in that high and spacious hall 2,000 persons were assembled. There are in the isle of Scio, the most populous of all the isles of Greece, upwards of 100,000 Christians. The rural Greeks are far less malignant than the citizens, and of the latter all are not equally hostile to the Latins. In the fury of the persecution, when the Turks cried havock, and all the anger of the islanders was loosed against the Latins, many embraced our religion of themselves, and looked upon exiles, and alienation of their goods, with folded arms and christian equanimity.

Several others, though reluctant to relinquish the ritual of Greece, which is assuredly good and holy in itself, persist in frequenting the confessionals of confessors of the catholic religion, from which, by refusing them communion, the schismatics have frequently endeavoured to divert them : but this has profited them nothing. In the country, the people have a tendency to virtue. They heard me with joy when I spoke to them of God, and invariably several confessed themselves on such occasions. If we had the liberty enjoyed in other islands of making regulated missions through the villages, and could matters subside into a calm, many excellent Christians should be produced. The greatest opposition is not that which is offered by the Turks, who naturally esteem and love the Latins, and more especially the French. It comes entirely from the superiors of the Greeks, with whom it is difficult to decide whether ignorance or prejudice is paramount. As to the Turks, they are whatever you require them to

be ; nothing in the world is wanting but to pay them well. Were the Latins as malignant as the Greeks, and desirous of turning their tyranny against their foes, the Turks would decidedly do whatever they desired at only half the cost. They express themselves to this effect. They have an inclination towards the Latins as being noble, or *Beyzadez* as they say, while they designate the Greeks as the populace, or *Taïf*. The Jesuits are especially respected by the Turks. During the long abode that I made in Scio, I had frequent and public proofs of this from the Pachas and distinguished agas of the isle. The present possessor of our former house and church proposed to give them up to us for what they cost him, which amounted to no more than eighty hundred purses, or four thousand crowns ; and we should have resumed this property long before now, could we but procure this sum for him. The commanders of the gallies appertaining to the island, are prodigal of favours, and permit us, without any impediment, to administer the rites of religion to their slaves. One day I was surprised at receiving reiterated invitations from a bey to come on board his galley, with the book with which I blessed the holy water, because his slaves, as this grave man assured me, saw spirits in the night time, which troubled their repose. The Latins in the gallies are about 1,200, and consist of Germans, Spaniards and Italians, and haply a hundred French. Three years since, Father Richard Gorre, my successor, expired among the slaves. They were making preparations for departure to the Black Sea, and the plague was in the gallies. It was Easter ; he hastened to those children of his choice, who apprehended death without the sacraments, and supplicated the com-



munion. He was entire days amongst them, having pity, as he said, upon so many souls so utterly abandoned. Ultimately, a malignant fever struck him down in eight and forty hours. Every soul in the city was present at his obsequies, lamenting his ashes as a father, invoking his spirit as a saint.

If we ever have the happiness of seeing our religion enjoy a few halcyon days at Scio, and should we collect, as before the Venetians made themselves masters of the isle, eight or ten Jesuits, we should be able to re-open the missions of Metelene, of the Mosconisses, and of Samos. I have visited these islands : the natives are an amiable people. Whenever I harangued them on the truths of Christianity, they hung upon my words with attention and respect. At Metelene, through which I travelled thrice, I was endowed by the archbishop with all his powers, in the three towns and twenty-four villages of his dependency. "Sir Priest, bring three or four of your French clergy hither," he exclaimed, with a familiar and open air, "and you may preach to my people as often as you please. You will do no trifle, if you make them honest men ; for I find it very difficult to reform them."

I have been twice at the Mosconisses ; it is a multitude of little isles to the east of Metelene, of great fertility in wine and oil, and very near the coast of Anatolia. A town is contained in the largest isle, consisting of 600 houses, where they entreated me to live, for ever promising to do whatsoever I should bid them. When last I was there, they were afflicted with the plague, and I was earnestly entreated by the terrified inhabitants to pacify the anger of the Lord immediately. Judging from appearances,



they had not the most distant idea of applying to their papas. Over against the town of Mosconissa, a town of double size appears upon the mainland, which latter forms a curve round about the oriental point of Metelene; following this curving of the coast, the extent of which is forty leagues, you meet with many lovely shores sprinkled here and there with human habitations, whose inhabitants are quite as unacquainted with religion as the Indians of America. Upon these shores, as well as on the inland farms, many Latin slaves are to be met with, who, unhappy people! hardly know they have a soul. The most important places on the curve are Adramit and Elea, ancient towns, but which are, at the present day, completely ruined. Many little places may be met with here and there thinly strewn along the shore. 'Tis a very lovely country, but utterly unknown, where invaluable souls are perpetually perishing without any one enquiring if they so much as exist. We may say the same of all that part of Anatolia as you penetrate the terra firma. There are only some footsteps of the faith among the Greeks, who have lost even the language of the country: the shreds of the service which they still preserve are offered up in Turkish. There is another mission at the portals, as it were, of Scio—the lovely isle of Samos; it contains 1,800 houses, and near 15,000 souls, and perhaps three villages. The bishop and the chief ecclesiastics invited us to visit them. I sojourned in the isle for three weeks' time, delivering instructions, and preaching in the public places and the churches, as much as I desired. Of all the natives of the Isles of Greece, I have seen none more intellectual than those of Samos; they stand in the utmost need, however, of

zealous missionaries. I expect these ancient missions will speedily put forth new flowers and fruits, when that of Scio (as it were their centre) is once re-established.

4th March, 1714.

TARILLON.

AN ACCOUNT, IN THE FORM OF A JOURNAL, OF A  
NEWLY-FORMED ISLE WHICH HAS ISSUED FROM THE  
SEA AT SANTORIN, OR SANTERINI.

It is not in our days only that the Gulf of Santorin hath become famous from the new and extraordinary isles to which it has given birth. According to Pliny, lib. 2. cap. 82, the isle Santerini, whose ancient appellation was Theramenen, or Thera, itself issued from the profound; but, be that as it may, two other isles, which are adjacent, have certainly had this origin. That which was known as Hiera in anterior times, because it was consecrated to Pluto, is designated now the great *Cammeni*, or Big-burnt-island. It was in the 145th Olympiad, according to the historian Justin, that is 196 years before the birth of Christ, that the waves revealed it. These are the words which the historian uses:—*Eodem anno inter insulas Theramenen et Therasium medio utriusque ripæ et maris spatio terræ motus fuit in quo cum admiratione navigantium repente ex profundo cum calidis aquis insula emersit.*

The other, called the Little *Cammeni* by the people of the country, or Little-burnt-island, to discriminate this isle from the other which is greater, was born of the ocean, (according to the account of the very oldest people, who had heard it from their ancestors) in 1573.—Inhabitants reside upon these two isles, or rather these

two rocks—the great Cammeni being the elder isle—shews a little verdure after rains. The Little-burnt-island, which is nearer Santerini, is always black and sterile. It is between these two islands, but much nearer the smaller than the greater, that the island has emerged which this narrative relates to. The isle of Santorin, whose name is so frequently repeated in this account, is amongst the most southern of all the isles of Greece, and is a hundred miles perhaps from Candia: its circuit is from twelve to fifteen leagues. The soil is very dry, and barley and cotton are said to be the only produce, though abundant figs and valuable wines are likewise found there. Horror is inspired by the repulsive aspect of the side that 'contemplates' the two Cammeni, and the novel isle, black rocks and dismal precipices, which fire appears to have consumed for ages, compose it exclusively. Upon the island there are five walled towns, pretty well defended, which are called castles, and of which Scaro is the most considerable. Scaro is constructed on a little cape protruding in the sea to a considerable distance. It is the nearest to the recent isle of all the castles, being only three miles distant from the latter. At one of the extremities of the island, on a mountain called San Stephano, some ancient ruins of white marble may be seen. Medals had been stricken in Santorin at one time, and many are found with the heads of Marcus Aurelius, Lucius Verus, Septimus Severus, and of his family, &c. On the reverse, they have all the word *Therecn*, or *Theraoin*, an ancient name for the isle of *Thera*.

On the dawn of day, on the 23d of May, 1707, they perceived the initials of the novel isle, which was issuing

from the deep, between Big-burnt-island and the smaller Cammeni, at the distance of three miles from Santorin. May the 18th, at noontide, two little jolts had been felt at Santorin—tremblings of an earthquake.—They were at the time unattended to, but persons had subsequently reason to suppose that it was at that identical instant, that the novel isle commenced its separation from the bottom of the sea, and began to lift its head above the surface of the deep. Be that as it may, certain it is, that very early in the morning, certain mariners having discerned across the surge the pinnacles, or points of the nascent isle, without being able to ascertain their nature, resolved that these were the relics of a shipwreck which had happened, they imagined, the preceding night. In this idea they pulled for the isle with the utmost energy, in the hope of being the first that should profit by the wreck.

But as soon as they perceived that, in place of floating fragments, they were points of crags and solid land, the terrified mariners returned to publish, with pale faces, wherever they came, the nature of their discovery. Fear was at first universal throughout Santerini, where they were well aware that lands of this description had never become visible without causing disasters to their isle. Two or three days, however, having passed without anything disastrous occurring, some of its citizens summoned resolution, having more hardihood than the others, to contemplate it near at hand. A length of time was spent in circumnavigation; they went round and round, and pausing before every side, considered its every appearance with attention. Ultimately perceiving nothing perilous, they approached and disembarked. Curiosity

caused them to range from rock to rock ; wherever they turned, there appeared a species of stone as white as bread, which could be cut as easily, and so strongly resembling it in form, consistency, taste, and colour, that you would really have taken it for wheaten bread. A discovery that caused them more delight, was that of fine fresh oysters, fastened to the rocks, which are exceeding rare in Santerini ; they set about collecting them with great industry. But when they least expected it, and while they were busily employed in depriving it of oysters, a sudden shudder or shivering seized upon the earth. A universal tremor ran among the rocks, and illimitable horror filling the hearts of the fishers as the ground vacillated underneath them, they quitted their prey in consternation, and, springing to their boats, rowed from the isle with the rapidness of lightning. The island increased visibly, self-elevated from the surface of the sea, it grew!! and its rocks arose with such rapidity, that in two days' time, it doubled its extent, and attained the height of twenty feet.

As this upward motion, by which it was increased in breadth and height, was sometimes slow and sometimes fast, the isle did not equally increase every day on every side. It even sometimes sunk in certain places, while it arose and extended itself slowly and laterally in other places.

One day, amongst others, a rock, remarkable alike from size and shape, issued from the ocean, forty or fifty paces from the isle. For four days I watched this rock with great attention, when it sunk into the sea, and never appeared a second time. But it was not so with several

others, which, having arisen, and ranged themselves beside their predecessors, dipped in the deep and then returned, subsided, and then were swallowed by the circling waters, and then emerged and became firm, permanent, and stable. The swaying of such mighty masses shook the Little-burnt-isle, upon whose summit they observed a fissure, cleft or opening, which was never seen before. In the gulf, the colour of the ocean often changed during the time. At one time it became a brilliant green, then a reddish hue came over it; it then faded to a pale yellow, an insupportable stink accompanying these changes.

Smoke was seen to issue on the 16th of July, from a chain of black rocks, which, at sixty paces from the isle, had suddenly arisen in a place where bottom never had been found. Two separate isles existed now, one was called the black and the other the white isle; their union, however, was not long delayed, but so they came together, that the black newly-risen rocks were the centre of the isle. The smoke which issued from these rocks was thick and whitish, such as might emerge from many kilns of lime if united into one. It was borne by the wind upon many habitations, and its volumes were rolled in without doing any harm, as its smell was not very insalubrious. Ruddy tongues of fire ascended from the centre of the smoke on the night of the nineteenth of July, which, while fear sunk heavy in their hearts, were regarded by the islanders of Santerini with considerate and rueful eyes; by those more especially of Scaro, the most exposed by their vicinity, for the latter were only half a mile from the fiery isle. Being built upon the point of a promontory which is, comparatively



speaking, as narrow as a sword blade, Scaro, half suspended as it hangs above the sea on the summit of a precipice, is exceedingly dangerously placed. At the melancholy sight of fire and smoke which were shooting from the sea so near them, they expected nothing but that they and their very narrow headland should be blown into the sky; for, as they supposed, there were veins of sulphury matter, which, doubtless communicated from the fiery isle, which like trains of gunpowder, sooner or later would explode, they said, and if this did not happen, assuredly something else would. A tremor of the earth would shake them all down from the summit of their precipice, and drown them with their houses in the deep underneath. Either way they are sped. They resolved to relinquish the castle as they called it, to change their dwellings and remove their goods, or haply to retire to some other island till time should tell what this might end in. Many in reality removed, and it was with difficulty that others were induced to stay. The Turks, who were then at Santerini, to raise the tribute which is levied for the grand Signior, were not the persons who were least affected. Astounded, appalled, and overwhelmed with amazement at seeing fire ascending omnipotently from so deep a sea, the Turks exhorted all the people to repeat their prayers, and to make their children march through all the streets, crying, *Kyrie eleison, Kyrie eleison*, at the tops of their tiny voices. Accordingly, their innocent processions filled the city, a measure recommended by the Mussulmans with emphasis, and for which those serious Turks assigned a solemn reason. Not having yet offended God, these innocents were more proper to appease his wrath than full-grown

people, they said. Nevertheless, the flame that as yet appeared was but a trifle, since it only issued from a single point, and the column of fire was only visible in the night time.

Neither fire or smoke appeared upon the white isle; nevertheless, it failed not to increase continually: the black arose with more rapidity, however, and mighty rocks emerged diurnally, which added at one time to its length, and sometimes to its wideness; and so perceptibly, that these changes caught the eye from time to time, and you could see it grow. These rocks were united to the isle sometimes, and were sometimes very remote: thus four black islands were formed in a month, which, in four days time, came together, and only one was to be seen. We remarked, moreover, that the smoke was much augmented, and as no wind was blowing at the time, it ascended in one straight column to so great a height, that the mighty mass was seen from Candia, and Naxos, and remoter isles. This smoke appeared to be, at night, a tremendous pillar of fire,—to the height at least of fifteen feet 'twas all fire apparently; the sea blushed with a reddish froth in some places, while in others it assumed a yellow hue. So infectious was the smell which diffused itself through Santorin, that you might see here and there long pyramids of fire lighted by the citizens, flaming along all the streets, where perfumes were burned to counteract the stench. This infection had continued for a day and a half, when a strong, fresh southern wind swept it all away, clearing the island of the evil, but only to replace it by another; for the long column of ignited smoke was turned on the island, and, scorching the vineyards in its course, it burned up the grapes, then nearly

fit for gathering, and it left them in a single night shriveled, dry and useless. Silver and brass suddenly lost their brightness, 'twas observed, and became black and dim wherever the volumes of this smoke were rolled; it likewise occasioned vomitings and violent head-aches to the islanders. The white isle sank on a sudden about this time, and became ten feet lower than it had been previously.

July the 31st, smoke was seen gushing from the sea, and its billows were perceived to boil in two places, the one at thirty and the second at sixty paces, from the black isle. These two spots were circular, and in them the water was like oil upon the fire. While this continued, which was upwards of a month, fishes were found dead upon the sea shore. We were startled the succeeding night by a loud, dull noise, like salvos of cannon heard remote, from the centre of the furnace. As quick as lightening, two long lances of flame shot upwards to the heavens; they were extinguished instantaneously. On the 1st of August, we heard the same dull noise repeatedly—smoke succeeded, not white as before, but a blueish black, which rose right towards the skies, unaffected by a fresh north wind, to a prodigious elevation in the form of a column. If it had been night, this pillar of smoke would have been one mass of fire. The noise was not so loud upon the 7th of August, but still it was as loud as if many loads of stones were hurled, roaring to the bottom of some pit of vast profundity. It is not at all improbable, that these were mighty rocks, which, having first arisen with the rising isle, their gravity detached them, and they rolled down that mountain's side. This idea may receive corroboration from the cir-

cumstance, that the edges of the isle were eternally in motion during these great noises. The rocks which formed it going and coming, subsiding now, and now appearing. This dull noise had continued many days, when it suddenly became much louder; and this tremendous roaring was so similar to thunder, that when it thundered in reality, which was twice or thrice, the difference was scarce discernible between the salvos in the sky and the noise that issued from the deep. On the 21st of August, the fire and smoke perceptibly diminished. There was very little fire in the night time even. It resumed new vigour at the dawn, however, when it exhibited a strength which it never had displayed. The smoke was very red and very dense, and the fire so furious, that the sea which surrounded the black isle boiled and smoked surprisingly. One night, telescope in hand, I perused this world of fire. Besides the furnace which burned on the apex of the isle, sixty others were to be seen of the most brilliant red. On the other side of the isle, there were probably as many, which I could not see. I found that the isle was much more high on the morning of the 22nd than it had been when I went to bed. A chain of newly-risen rocks, which had issued from the water in the night time, had added to its breadth by fifty feet; while the sea was mantled with that reddish scum which I have already spoken of, and the smell of which was insupportable. The fire on the 5th of September found a passage for itself at the end of the black isle, in the direction of Therasia, which was a continuation once of the land of Santerini, but which, they say, was separated by a shivering of the earth, by which the sea was put between them. From this new orifice

the fire was seen to issue for a few days, during which it seemed to slumber in the greater furnace.

We might, if our safety were secure, and had our spirits been relieved from the fardel of inquietude, have elicited amusement from the spectacle before us. The mouth sent forth from its lips of flame three immense sky rockets, of the most beautiful and brilliant fire, three several times. The scene, however, was completely altered the succeeding nights. When the dull rolling of subterranean thunder, which commonly occurred, had roaring, died within the caverns, long sheafs of light appeared over the isle in the air, all over corruscating with myriads of sparkling radiations, and which, following one another, ascended to an amazing height, and then returned in a rain of stars which enlightened all the isle. This play was troubled with a new phenomenon, which some esteemed of evil augury. A lance of fire, that reached from earth to heaven, detached itself in the centre of the rockets, and having hung above the town of Scaro, perfectly at rest, perfectly immoveable, on a sudden it clomb into the skies like a fiery serpent, and piercing the altitude, 'twas lost to human vision.

The two isles, the white and the black, from continually growing, began to unite on the 9th of September, and to make no more than a single body. That end of the isle lying opposite the south-east ceased to increase in height or length, subsequent to this conjunction. While that which was opposite the west might be distinctly seen perpetually growing longer. Of all the openings of which I have spoken, only four emitted fire. Smoke issued with impetuosity at times from the whole four, while sometimes it emerged from one or two merely—



sometimes with and sometimes without roarings, but almost always with such hissings, that they might have been mistaken for sounds emitted by an organ-pipe, and at times for the roarings of ferocious animals.

The 22nd of September, the thunder under ground had never been so terrible as on this day and the following, though it should have issued with less fury, it was natural to think, from four mouths than from one. Peal upon peal, doubling detonations like universal salvos of the heaviest artillery, were at least ten times heard in four and twenty hours, and then from the fiery lips of the larger mouth, red hot stones, of enormous magnitude, were hurled flaming to the sky, soaring as if to burn heaven's concave ; from which, descending towards the earth, they sunk hissing in the sea. The very thickest smoke accompanied these thunders, whose enormous volumes ascended in the shape of waves, which, whenever it was dissipated, clouds of ashes were diffused, of which whirlwinds were carried to Anasi, an island 25 miles from Santorin. Some of these ashes were collected, and when placed upon black, their colour appeared whitish, whereas their tinge was blackish when their ground was white. I flung some into the fire to discover the effect, because it was as granulous as gunpowder, but it only feebly hissed and spit without giving forth the slightest flame.

September 18, there was a concussion of the earth at Santorin, which, however, did no damage. The isle became conspicuously greater, as well as the accompanying fire and flame, which on this day issued by new apertures. I had never before seen such sheets of flame, nor heard such resounding peals of thunder under ground;



their violence was so extraordinary as to make the houses shake in Scaro. The rattle and the clatter of a universe of stones, which, singing as they went, were whirled through the air with the whirring noise of bullets, and then fell back upon the isle with such a collision as seemed sufficient to dissolve the frame of things, penetrated to our ears through a mighty mass of smoke, which exactly resembled an inverted mountain. The small cammeni, or the Little-burnt-island, was often covered with these red hot stones, making that black and barren spot resplendant. When first we saw it sheathed in flame, in this way, from the nearness of the isles, we immediately imagined that the fire had passed from one to the other under water; we deceived ourselves; it was simply occasioned by sulphureous stones which were burned out in half an hour.

September the 21st, after one of those tremendous peals, and while the Little-burnt-island was a sheet of flame, three great flashes which resembled lightening, which the crater flung out as if banners of flame traversed in the turn of an eye, the whole horizon of the deep. Instantaneously the new isle trembled through its whole extent. A portion of the crater's lip fell in, and red hot rocks of prodigious size flew flaming to the clouds. We imagined that the mine had spent its energy. For four successive days, all was quiet as the grave: the crater's lips were calm, distinct, and clearly visible, and neither fire nor smoke were belched against the serene skies.

The fire, however, resumed its fury on the 25th, and the isle became more terrible than ever. Peal succeeding peal, our words seemed extinguished on our lips; we found it difficult to hear one another, when suddenly

amidst this mighty uproar, one explosion roared so loud that its bellowing seemed to fill the universe, sending every soul in Santerini aghast and speechless to the churches. The solid rock that Scaro stands on shook responsively, and the doors of all the dwelling-houses were flung furiously open.

For the purpose of precluding useless repetitions, I shall be satisfied with saying, that things continued in the same condition during October, November, December, 1707 ; and January, 1708, there was one eruption of the furnace every day, and sometimes five or six.

A tremendous tremefaction of the earth occurred at Santerini, on the 10th of February, 1708. There had been a slighter undulation in the night time, which caused us to conjecture, informed as we were by sad experience, that our volcano was preparing us some scene of terror. We were not kept waiting for it very long—fire, flame, smoke, and peals of subterraneous thunder. 'Twas horrible. Rocks of such a size as never had appeared above the level of the water lifted their ample bulk into the air, and the delirious billowy boilings of the deep augmented so amazingly, that, accustomed as we were to its frantic concussions, the hurly-burly was so horrible, every heart was terror stricken.

The roaring under ground ceased to intermit as formerly, for now night and day 'twas one continued roar, while the vomiting of fire from the principal furnace was as frequent as five times in a quarter of an hour ; and meantime, its doubling peals of thunder, by the magnitude, the amazing multitude of stones shot, as it were, from the throat of the crater ; by the tottering and tremefaction of the houses, and by the fire which

flamed in the middle of the open day (which we never yet experienced) surpassed the horrors we had hitherto beheld.

The 15th of April was famous above all other days for the number and the violence of these repeated peals. Seeing nothing for a length of time but flame and fiery smoke extending to the skies, and flights of burning stones filling the air for ever, we were certain that we should not find a fragment of the isle, as it would all be shot into the skies. Nothing of the kind occurred, however, half of the volcano's lip was broken for the second time, but the edge of the crater became higher than before, by heaps of stones and ashes which repaired it.

From the 15th day of April till the 23rd of May, the anniversary of the birth of the isle, every thing continued in the same condition. But while the island continued to increase in height, you could remark that laterally it grew no larger. The crater of the greatest furnace grew up to a taller height, and by means of a melted matter, sulphur and vitriol in my esteem, the fabric was kept together until it formed an immense pate to which the declivity or slope was quite enormous. In the end, by imperceptible gradations, every thing grew gradually calm, the fire and the smoke diminished by degrees, the thunder became tolerable under ground, and though frequent, its reiterated claps were not so frightful. Perhaps the combustibles that fed the fire were no longer so abundant, and their canaliculated passages had been probably enlarged.

I executed a design I had formed from the first (of visiting the new born isle,) the 15th of July. The sea

was calm, the sky serene, the fires were very feeble. I prevailed upon our Latin bishop, M. L. Francois Crispo, together with some priests, to join the party; we were careful to procure a good caique whose seams were diligently caulked and sedulously stuffed with a double share of tow. Determined as we were to debark upon the isle, we rowed right upon a shore where, though the sea had ceased to boil, it still was smoking. No sooner had this smoke received us, than we felt that we were seized by a suffocating heat. Leaning from the gunnel of the boat, a member of our party put his hand into the tide: it was scalding hot. We were yet five hundred paces from our journey's end. As we considered it impossible to approach the isle by this way, we turned towards the point which was farthest from the great volcano, that is, at the end at which the island had increased in length. The fire, with which it still was flaming, and the billowy boiling of the surges, compelled us to describe a semicircle, in doing which we felt the heat. I had an opportunity of seeing the space between the little Cammeni and the newly-formed isle. It was greater than I had anticipated, and judging by the eye a galley might pass with a flowing sheet, in the places where this frith was narrowest. From thence we proceeded to the great Cammeni, where we could consider at our ease the isle in its utmost length, and especially that side which we could not contemplate from Scaro. It was about 200 feet in height, a mile in breadth, and perhaps 5000 feet in circuit. When we had spent about an hour in considering all its appearances, the propensity to visit it resumed its empire over us, as well as to attempt to tread upon the shore of that particular part

known by the name of the White Isle. This place having ceased to increase for several months, neither fire nor smoke had since been seen there. Having re-embarked, we directed our rowers to convey us thither. When we were distant from the shore, perhaps two hundred paces, I put my hand into the brine, and found that the nearer we approached, the hotter it became. We cast the lead, but there was no bottom to be found with five and twenty fathom. Resting on our oars, we paused to deliberate as to advance or retrogression, when the volcano suddenly resumed its fury, bellowing aloud and belching fire and flame with all its ordinary violence. In order to crown us with disgrace, as a fresh breeze was blowing from the fire, we were powdered by the dust, and buried in the billows of the smoke, which came pouring upon us in enormous volumes. We were in raptures with the wind, since it brought us nothing worse. To see the condition to which we were reduced by this inundation of ashes, Cato might have smiled; but, however droll the figures which our fellows cut, we all maintained our gravity; for the only thing we thought of was to hasten our retreat. We were but a mile and a half from the isle, when the hurley-burley recommenced, and a quantity of red hot stones were flung into the place we had quitted. Moreover, when we disembarked at Santerini, our mariners remarked, that the warmth of the water had removed all the pitch from the keel of the caique, whose seams began to gape on every side.

I remained at Santerini till the 15th of August, 1708; the isle continued, during all this time, to vomit fire and smoke, and burning stones, accompanied with a great

rumbling, but which was far inferior to that of the preceding months. From my departure to this 24th of June, 1710, I have received many letters, and put questions to such people as came from Santerini. The isle, I understand, continues still to burn, and the sea in its vicinity to boil ; and there is no appearance of a cessation.

*Extracts from a Letter on the same subject, written from Santerini,\* September 14th, 1712.*

It is now precisely a year since I arrived in Santerini. A few hours subsequent to my arrival, I proceeded to examine, with all possible exactitude, the present situation, and every other wonder connected with the isle, with which you wish to be acquainted. I have had a sufficiency of leisure to reiterate my observations ; for the isle was almost beneath my eyes, being at little more than three miles' distance. I have frequently described a circle round it, but always at a little distance, from the warmth retained by the water, at a quarter of a league from shore. While we impelled the boat with measured strokes, somebody on board kept his fingers in the wave to apprise us of the moment when the water was too warm. Were it not for this, we should be caught in the manner in which many were at first—the pitch disappearing from the bottom of the boats as clean as if fire had removed it from the vessel. Its circumference appeared to be about five miles. Stones, that are burned to the colour of a cinder, are heaped pell-mell over all its surface. Some having fallen on their ends, present, in

\* Five years subsequent to the first appearance.



the middle of the waste, the appearance of a Turkish cemetery.

On the water's edge, in the newly-formed isle, a natural fabric arises opposite the small Cammeni, more than 400 feet in height, something like a bastioned keep, which arises so stately, majestic, and well-proportioned, that it was long before I could yield to the belief, that it was not in reality the work of men. The body of this fortress appears to be composed of a greyish clay; it is open at the summit, and at the sides it is encrusted with a molten matter, which is seemingly a mixture of vitriol and sulphur. This opening, 30 or 40 feet perhaps in diameter, is designated by the natives of the country the Great Furnace. In the other side, three apertures appear a little under this opening, resembling embrasures of guns. On the side that fronts the shore, the face of the furnace is perfectly steep, presenting so perpendicular a front, that it could not possibly be clomb. On the far side of the furnace, you may ascend to the summit of the crater, by means of stupendous rocks piled on one another. During a year that I have been here, I only saw the furnace play in a single instance, and that was on the day that I arrived. It commenced at two in the afternoon, and continued until four.

I know not how to express what I heard and saw. In two hours' time, with a noise which equalled the report of a park of artillery, seven explosions succeeded one another with such rapidity, that one hardly waited for the other, while red hot rocks of twenty feet in length were sent to an amazing height, and then fell flaming in the sea at two miles' distance. The dense smoke by which they were accompanied, which was nearly as thick,

white, and palpable as cotton, stretched sublimely to the sky in the form of a column. Indifferent to the wind that was blowing very freshly, this smoke, without the slightest declination, ascended like a tower perfectly perpendicular. While these were emitted from the loftiest aperture, the orifices underneath vomitted streams of melted matter, which were violet, red, or orange colour, and which glistened as they ran. After the louder claps of the volcano, followed by the emission of the rocks, echoes might be heard below which absolutely seemed to resemble drums and trumpets; while the shrill neighings of innumerable horses, the yelling tones of hounds, and the bellowing of bulls, seemed to the pale listeners to resound in the bowels of the land. Since that eventful day, which was, as I declared, the 14th of last September, the furnace has neither vomited fire nor bellowed thunder. From time to time, the three embrasures of the furnace puff out volumes of a thick smoke, which cannot tower from the upper orifice, unless when it happens to be more abundant. When rain is very heavy, smoke ascends from the body of the furnace, which spits and hisses from the falling rain just like red hot iron when water happens to be thrown on it. At present, I am employed in making out a plan of the new island, not indeed with geometrical exactitude, but with as little error as may be. I have not been able to assume a sufficiency of courage; if better, it be not temerity to repair with some of the inhabitants of Santerini, to debark upon the isle in those situations where its heat is least intolerable, but from which, in all the instances, the visitors retreated with such velocity, as utterly to eclipse the rapidness with which they had approached it; their

shoes being burned to the very flesh, and their vessel overflowing with the tide, though two persons were employed to bale it out, as well as to stop the apertures occasioned by the heat.

The adventurers brought home stones of purified sulphur, with a congealed and solid substance, looking very like a mixture of bitumen and vitriol. A liquid matter, of a reddish colour, but which is sometimes yellow, and very often green, issues from an angle at the foot of the volcano, though it fail to vomit fire. This liquor comes from underneath the earth, and, for four or five miles in every direction, the deep is discoloured by its junction. The newly-formed isle has ceased to grow. In proportion to its augmentation, since its emission from the ocean, has the Little-burnt-isle decreased, and the latter daily continues to diminish. A lapse of six or seven feet has taken place in the side of Santerini, which is opposite. Certain marine magazines are on a level with the water, where the caique now enters with a flowing sheet, while previously to the appearance of the isle they were five feet above the surface of the sea.

I cannot imagine how all this will end, but the sight is indeed very far from being agreeable. The great horse shoe which constitutes the bay of Santerini, in which three new isles appeared at intervals, the traditions of the country aver, was dry land at one time that sunk into the sea. Perhaps the other side of Santerini, like the arm of a balance, with its towns and castles, shall descend in the deep, now that this side hath ascended. What would seem to confirm my conjecture is, 1st, that earthquakes commonly occur in Santerini; hence that there is fire in the foundation of the isle, is not improbable, which, slowly

consuming the basis of the island, on some fine day the latter may suddenly subside when least expected; as along the lofty scarp that fronts the sea, from time to time, tremendous rocks detach themselves from the steep, and descend into the surge: one moonlight night, some years ago, in this way, one half of our garden slipped away from us.

2nd, The isle substantially consists of pumice-stone, which is simply a stone that has been subjected to the action of fire, and in which the inhabitants of Santerini hollow habitations with facility. Ere the basis of the isle could thus be calcined, it must have been completely penetrated by igneous exhalations.

3d, In the champaign country, as well as in the vineyards, the soil is simply fine light ashes, at a few feet under which the pumice-stone is found. This soil does not fail to be fertile, such as it is, especially in rainy seasons; when the season is dry, however, the country is desolate. He who has a field to-day may have nothing but the naked stone to-morrow, as the soil may have quitted him and flown to a neighbour, and haply from him to some one else; being transported by the winds from place to place.

4th, The wines that are grown in Santerini have the colour and the taste of sulphur, and are, speaking generally, exceeding strong, proving that they are impregnated with the spirit of fire. In a word, I compare Santerini to a mighty laboratory, where corn and wine and all commodities are created by the agency of minerals and fire. The isle has already lasted many years, God grant that it may still continue, and that the fires which seem operating beneath it may not penetrate the solid basis of the isle, and, flaming to the heavens, overwhelm Santerini in combustion.

THE  
MISSION OF ST. JOSEPH AT ANTOURA.

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It can never be forgotten by the mission of Antoura, that its establishment is owing to Signior Abuneufel, the most distinguished of all the nobles of the Maronite nation. He was not only our protector throughout the whole course of his valuable life, he was the benefactor of the Jesuits; it may be said of him with truth, that his nation is indebted to this nobleman for all those works of charity which heaven has deigned to operate by the ministry of the missionaries whom he established, maintained, defended.

Antoura is a village in the Anti-Libanus, situated between Beirout and Gibal, or Giblos, being five French leagues from either village. The cedar wood was carried to the latter town, which was hewn upon the heights of Libanus, for the temple of Solomon; it was fashioned in the town of Giblos, and carried upon chariots to Jerusalem at the fiat of Hiram, King of Tyre.

In Arabic, Antoura signifies *the rocky fountain*; for it stands beside a craggy mountain, from which a limpid fountain issues which meanders through the town.

In this town it is that Signior Abuneufel procured us an establishment—an advantageous establishment; for when they return to this house, overwhelmed with fatigue from the rude missions of the mountains, our brethren

are speedily restored to health in its salutary air. Moreover, as the country is Catholic and Christian, we are always certain of a safe asylum here, should sudden revolutions at any time drive us from our other missions. Such is the situation of Antoura, too, that our missionaries can make evangelical excursions into any given quarter of Lebanon, where our spiritual aid may be eminently needed, with great conveniency.

Though our house is small, it suits our purposes: a little garden, which accompanies it, supplies us with legumes. They are watered by the waters of the fountain which I spoke of. At a little distance from our house, we have a chapel, which was built and ornamented originally by one of our Society, a skilful architect; it was dedicated to Saint Joseph, by our earlier missionaries, who conferred upon the mission the name of this puissant protector, whose credit with our Saviour we frequently experience. We are obliged at the present time, for particular reasons, to rebuild this little chapel; we intend to make it more commodious for our disciples and ourselves—an enterprise we never should have undertaken, had not certain noble ladies of Lorraine benevolently assisted us. Even ornaments were provided by those ladies for the church, and sent out to us; a tabernacle has been recently received from them, in which our Saviour's body will repose with decency.

Missions to the remotest mountains of Lebanon, and Anti-libanus, and the villages of the Kesroan, succeed one another without interruption. We take different seasons of the year for them; for the remotest missions, we select the times when the Maronites keep lent; and the Maronites keep four. They keep one in common



with all other Catholics previously to Easter, another is our Advent, and those of the Assumption of the Virgin and of St. Peter and St. Paul, (these two last of fifteen days' duration) constitute the others. Between these lents the intervals are spent in missions to the villages around us, composing the Kesroan, which consists of 40 villages, considerably peopled. These villages are visited successively, whose curates, who are neither so learned nor so well acquainted with the curial duties as those of Europe, and who are quite as desirous of our coming as are their congregations, receive us with affection. The profit they derive from their presence at our exercises, renders them much more useful to their flocks. Besides, there are many little monasteries scattered through the mountains, hermitages rather, of Greeks and Maronites, who recognise St. Anthony for their patriarch. These hermits are covered with a garment of goat's hair, and wear upon their heads a little black capouche ; their feet are naked, and they are constantly employed in manual labour or in prayer ; they relieve one another all the night time in singing a Syriac version of the psalms. They live upon legumes, and water is their beverage. They repose upon the floor, and observe unbroken silence all the day time. We are wonderfully well received when we visit these recluses : we maintain them in the Catholic religion, in the frequentation of the sacraments, in attending to their duties, and we and they hold conferences together. An eight days' retreat, such as St. Ignatius recommends, is found most efficacious by the missionaries as a means of reviving a religious spirit, and of establishing purity of faith and manners amongst the monastics.

The following is from a missionary amongst them :—  
“ Father Mole and myself have recently returned from an evangelic expedition in Kesroan. I had served an apprenticeship, some years before, under the egis of a missionary of much experience in reaping the harvest of the gospel in the vallies of Kesroan and the mountains of Lebanon.

Father Mole and I having been destined to continue it, we commenced our visits by the villages which are found along the margins of the Dog, and we penetrated subsequently to the hamlets that are deeper in the bosom of the land. We prolonged our sojourn in the these villages in proportion to their population, for some are scantily and others densely peopled ; but whether the inhabitants be few or many, they invariably need instruction. However, it is a pleasure to impart instruction, when the persons you approach for such a purpose, receive you with the gratulations with which we have been honoured in every instance, in these sequestered hamlets.

As soon as we had arrived in any village in which there was a church, a species of bell which is used universally in Kesroan, and which is not made of metal like its European brothers, but more a clapper than a bell, its material is wood, apprised the people of our coming, who immediately gather together, simultaneously. The sacred ceremony of mass commenced our exercises ; a discourse on the general duties of a Christian, on those of their particular condition, and on preparations for a good communion followed. Their untiring attention gives us animation in instructing them. One of our party dedicates himself to teaching the children their catechism. We find them uninformed generally, because

their parents and priests are much more occupied with household cares, and the cultivation of their farms, than with the instruction of their little ones.

We next became acquainted with the number of poor, and of the ailing, and with the dissensions and divisions which so often distract the people of the same place, and sometimes suspend fraternity in families. We dedicate a section of our afternoons to visitations of the sick, and in many instances, the gates of heaven revolve upon their hinges through the sacred aspersive rite to infants, who, but for these visits, would have died without it. To the spiritual succours we bestow upon the sick, we join the solace of the remedies we get from France. They are frequently successful, but still more so are our efforts in recalling concord to families from which it had been exiled.

The vicinity of certain self-called Christian nations, has introduced superstitions and disorders, from which it is especially incumbent on the missionaries to disengage the people; one of which comes from their commerce with the Druses, whose principle it is to cover the capital points of their religion with the veil of silence, and from whose contagious example, their neighbours never converse on the Catholic religion. Another is the want of devotional feelings in the females, especially the beautiful, who distinguish themselves, they imagine, from the commonality by an absence from the churches, except upon the solemn festivals, such as Easter and Christmas. Hence they receive no instruction from their pastors, who indeed are shamefully indifferent. They attend our instructions with the utmost freedom, during the continuance of our mission, and profit by them however.

Another crying sin, learned from persons who have no religion, is the crime of usury ; which, unfortunately, is exceedingly commodious. They think that the practice is permitted them, because no horror of the sin is exhibited by those whose business it should be to prohibit and denounce it. Usury gives rise to injustice, and sometimes to violence ; deplorable effects which the thirst of money never fails to produce. With patience, gentleness and charity, with fervid and with frequent prayer for the assistance of the arm of the Lord, only, may the missionary hope for victories over these infernal foes of human felicity. Such are the celestial weapons with which we arm us, when giving “ testimony of the light.” For His having mingled in the combat, for having descended and shewed himself on our side, we return our thanksgivings to the Godhead every day without excepting one. Numbers of sinners have confessed themselves, and those infallible marks of the penitents’ contrition, reconciliations, restitutions, have frequently followed such confessions. Their profound devotion at the table of the Lord, excite our feelings to such a degree, as despite us, to elicit some natural drops from our eyes.

From such examples, we discern with facility that between Catholics and Catholics, there is no small difference, that is, between those who, full of faith, approach our mysteries, and those whose faith is cold, and languishing to extinction.

Each mission is concluded by the last-named exercises, relinquishing which, we set out for an another.

It is needless to tell you, my Rev. Father, that the regret which we cause in a hamlet when we quit it, can be only equalled by the joy elicited by our arrival in the

next. You yourself have frequently experienced this in the missions you have made in your own person in Kesroan.

We have visited Geita, Touy and Keral ; considerable places upon Dog's Stream, and when these visits were ended, Father Bonamour and I entered on the missions of the villages of Cabral, Algiton, &c., which lie between Antoura and the Nahr Ibrahim. In all these places we had much to do, great opportunities of doing good, and very many disorders to correct.

In order that the fruits of our mission might continue to bloom, though the labourers were absent, we established public prayers for the dead in the populous villages: we have been taught by experience how salutary are such establishments.

I feel so strong an inclination for the missions of the champaign, as to solicit your permission to resume them when I return from Jerusalem, to which you allow me to repair, to view those sacred monuments which were once incarnardine with Jesus' blood.

In your holy sacrifices be all my sins remembered."

While giving an account of the missions of the champaign, this letter is an eulogy on the zeal, courage, and solid piety of the exemplary missionary who wrote it ; whose life, like a lamp, was consumed, by the light it shed over the savage rocks and rugged recesses of Lebanon, for when the pilgrim returned from Jerusalem, he came back to Antoura, the object of his affection, and without giving a moment to repose, resumed the rural missions with more fervency than previously, but alas, his strength was not commensurate with his generous devotion ; he was fated to succumb. When next we



saw him a fever was preying on his frame ; while diffusing life, the missionary had contracted death, a few days merely passed over him, then alas ! his footsteps perennially ceased to be seen. Our mission of Antoura, which looked upon him as one of those winged messengers of God, who sometimes trod the earth in holier times, has embalmed his memory in the innermost shrine of the heart ; our tears will long water the palms that grow over him. His gentleness, his modesty, his prepossessing air, his temper ever equal, his affection for the poor, won him golden opinions from every one who knew him ; the Maronites especially, who never speak of Father Neret without tears. Father Gravier, Father Cordier, Father Henré went before him, Father Nicholas Treffons followed him, all alike devoted to the Missions of the Mountains. We must admit that these are very hard, for in order to arrive there, pathways must be clomb, acclivitous and narrow, on which lie blocks of granite of huge dimensions, which completely interrupt those mountain passes. When you come before them, you must take your shoes off, and mount the masses barefoot to have a firmer footing ; in doing which their angles often cut the feet, besides you are either burned by the scorching sun of summer, or treading on the crunching snows of winter, with your chapel on your back, that is, every thing necessary for celebrating Mass, and medicines, chaplets, &c., staff in hand, and laden thus, the missionary pilgrim travels frequently from morning to eve, uninterruptedly.

Having arrived in a village in which a mission is to be established, he immediately commences it ; we are always welcome among the gentle docile Catholic Maronites, who love prayer and the word of God.



During the mission, the missionary is occupied in prayer and exhortation, in giving assistance to the sick, and in hearing general confessions. As the rectors commonly content themselves with asking at the solemn festivals, if the crowd of penitents who present themselves, are sorry for their sins, and administer absolution without further ceremony, on receiving an affirmative, general confessions are extremely necessary. The exercises of the morning being finished by a Mass, some one of the inhabitants invariably invites us to take our meal with him ; in lent this meal is never taken till the sun has set ; and frugality presides at the board. Olives, onions, rice, and roasted corn, constitute the feast. On state days and on solemn occasions, they dine more sumptuously. for a dish of oil is added to the meal, in which every person present dips his bread, but this is solely on state days and solemn occasions ; the bread, by the way, resembles pasteboard, it is perfectly flat and very insipid. These materials of the feast are placed upon the floor, while a carpet or a mat, which lies beneath them, serves instead of table, plate, or napkin. Even in the intervals between their lents, they do not know what the taste of meat is, though it is not by any means prohibited to the Maronites ; their wine is good, but it seldom blushes at the board.

Our time is passed in catechising children, holding particular conferences, and other missionary duties after dinner. Evening returned, we repair to our hosts, where we find their friends and families assembled, who expect new lectures from the guests, for the Maronites never weary of instruction. We draw the matter from the ancient Testament, and the lives of Saints whose names

they know. At last, when the day is done, we say a public prayer, and every one retires to repose. Inclining their persons, and placing their hands upon their heads, they extend them to the earth and salute us in the oriental fashion. *May a balmy sleep descend to seal your eye-lids, and refresh your frame, we supplicate the Lord! may your good angel guard you through the night, may the sun more brilliant than he ever rose before, ascend the skies to-morrow to illumine your way.*

The labour of the day, assuredly, requires the slumbers of the night, but a miserable carpet made of goats' hair laid upon the floor, being your only bed, incessantly disturbed as you are, by the querulous complainings of the infants, and the interminable attacks of whole hosts of fleas, who mount to the assault incessantly, in such incalculable numbers, that such forces met not, nor so vast a camp, when Agrican and all his northern powers besieged Albracca, as romances tell. Added to all these foes of slumber, the smoke of an half extinguished fire, roams around a chamber that never knew an aperture, seeking whom it may suffocate, which, of course, are those who are unaccustomed to it—strangers, visitors, and guests. Groaning under all these evils, we yearn for the dawn impatiently, when we must resume the labours of the mission, and continue them till every village has been visited. Though these missions of the mountains in the lenten season be excessively fatiguing, I assure you, sir, that the disposition of the Maronites is so benign, and the fruits that we gather so worthy of the seed, as to render our toils not tolerable merely, but consolatory. I shall conclude with a history which is

stranger than fiction, which, if we did not know the actors, we should never believe.

The chevaliers of Malta found a young and handsome Turk, who was only 13 years of age, and a native of Damascus, on board a saique which they had captured; they gave him to a nobleman, who took him home to Spain, and so engaging was the blooming infidel, the Spanish master conceived an affection for the Turkish stripling, he taught him the truths of the Catholic religion, and induced him to embrace it.

Being obliged to serve the Spanish Crown in Flanders, the master, some years subsequently, took his young convert to the wars; the virtuous qualities of this young man, and those especially which war requires, the latter of which were possessed by the youth in an eminent degree, caused the Spanish officer at the end of the campaign, to request a company of cavalry for this young Turk. He succeeded in obtaining it, and the new captain, who at this time was five and twenty years of age, repaired to the winter quarters of his regiment, which happened for that season to be Brussels.

From the captain's reputation as an officer of merit, he was received in the best circles in the city with distinction. The house of a lady, a widow of much wealth, who had come from Amsterdam, her native town, with a charming daughter, to pass some time in Brussels, was honored in a more especial manner by his visits.

The mother and the daughter were very pious Catholics: pleasure sparkled in their eyes at the visits of this officer, whose fascinating manner and elegant demeanour—whose politeness, wit, intelligence, and wisdom, first won their esteem, and then rivetted their friendship: the ladies knew the value set upon him by his brother officers.

The winter having passed, and the season for active service returned, our Turk, who was always considered as a Spaniard, thought, from the reception with which he had been honored in the widow's house, that he might demand the daughter's hand without impropriety.

Already prepossessed in favour of the chevalier, the proffer excited no displeasure in the mother. She imagined, from the merit which she knew him to possess, that the soldier could not fail to push his fortunes in the service, meanwhile his qualities of heart and head, she thought, would make her daughter happy.

These reflections of the mother, and the daughter's partiality, made the ladies simultaneously consent to the espousals. The marriage was solemnised in Brussels, with the approbation of the city. The husband and the wife lived ten years together, and only had a single son at the end of that period.

Some time afterwards, the chevalier, whether what is called the home sickness was preying upon his heart, or he had tired of his trade, or was influenced by some secret motive, which then it was his interest to hide, he opened a desire to his wife, which he said, he fervidly felt, of repairing to Jerusalem to visit the sepulchre: he should subsequently bring her back to Spain to see his family, he said, and shew her certain castles, which, he assured her, he possessed in his native land. The young Dutch lady, whose affection for her spouse was undiminished, consented to the pilgrimage. They resolved to say nothing of the subject to any one whatever, more especially to the mother, whose acquiescence in a purpose so extraordinary was not to be looked for. They contrived their embarkation in so secret a manner, in a vessel bound

for Italy, that it was only when they were gone that the mother was informed of it.

You may easily suppose that her surprise was extraordinary. When the lady was first acquainted with the circumstance, she repudiated the fact, and refused to believe it for a length of time. A strict search was instituted at her instigation, but the truth was so obvious in the end, as to compel her to admit it.

While the mother in the Netherlands was weeping for her child, the vessel which contained that lady, sailing off the coast of Africa, encountered two or three corsairs, who attacked it. The Spanish cavalier recognised them by their language, and desired, with their leave, to speak with the captain who commanded them, never doubting but that if they knew his birth he should be civilly received. The event answered his expectations; he shewed the rover when he got on board him, that he was anything rather than a Spaniard; he recounted his adventures, and imparted his design of returning into Turkey to renew the exercise of his religion there in liberty. He conjured the captain, at the same time, to assist him to execute his purposes. A native of Damascus was, luckily for him, on board the Turkish vessel, who knew his family, and gave credit to his statements. This was quite sufficient to induce the captain to espouse the interests of his visitor. He offered to receive him in his ship: the difficulty was, to give good reasons to his wife to persuade her to consent to this arrangement. He resolved, meantime, to propose it to her, by giving her to understand that their passage to Jerusalem would be performed with more speed on board a vessel of the powers of Barbary, than in the one of Holland, as the latter should



delay in Italy, while the rover would sail direct for Syria.

Though the project was repugnant to the young Dutch lady, she deemed it her duty to commit herself entirely to her husband's wisdom, who should know more than she.

The commander, who had all the mystery of the matter in his mind, received the father, the mother, and the infant with civility. After sailing for some days, they cast anchor at Algiers. The young Dutch lady, who knew not the name of this strange place, could not imagine where she was, but she was speedily aware that she was living among Mussulmen. Though exceedingly surprised, her astonishment was greater at perceiving, as she did, that her husband was perpetually among the Turks; and, what was even more extraordinary, was present at their prayers. She did not dare at first to communicate her trouble to her spouse, believing him a Catholic in heart; but, as she feared, (from his commerce with the Turks,) his eventual perversion, she pressed him fervently to quit Algiers, the sooner to attain the termination of their pilgrimage Jerusalem; persuaded, as she was, that her husband would be better any other place than there.

Her spouse, the Spaniard, who, on his side, thought of nothing but of shaking off the shackles which Belgium had imposed on the free profession of his faith, took advantage of the hurry of his wife, to conduct her into Turkey in a vessel which was ready to depart for Egypt. They embarked together with their infant son; but with very different projects in their breasts. They landed in a little time in Alexandria, and her spouse, the Spanish captain, who sought to secrete his practices from his lady's vigilance, was accustomed to repair in a private manner



to the mosques, and to associate with Mussulmen in secret.

The poor Dutch lady, in spite of the precaution of the simulated Catholic, ascertained her husband's conduct with horror, astonishment, and grief. Not knowing what to think, she had recourse to tears, without presuming to reveal the reason of her sorrow. The fictitious Spaniard, (whose esteem for his lady's worth was equal to his love for her beauty) felt convinced that he could not play the counterfeit much longer. He sought the means of making the discovery for a length of time in vain, though he could not disguise from himself the melancholy consequences which might follow such a revelation. Happening to come into her room one day, he found the sorrow of his lady so extreme, her desolation so excessive, 'twas so impossible to comfort her, that truth was wrung from his reluctant lips ; and he confessed his birth, his religion, the reason of his quitting Brussels, and the cause of his imaginary voyage to Jerusalem. She should enjoy, wherever they sojourned, he assured her, the most unrestricted liberty with reference to religion ; that as for him, he should never have any other object upon earth except to make her existence as happy as the day was long. He should find in the land of his nativity the means of making her felicitous, as there he should inherit his paternal property. His lady listened to these words in silence, for her feelings were of such a nature that her tongue refused to speak, but we may easily imagine the melancholy images that occupied her breast and mind, and each of them sadder than its antecedent drowned her in affliction. Banished forever from her native country, the woman of a bearded Turk, she was doomed to wear away her life, amid an alien

people, whose repugnant customs and religion, were diametrically opposed to all that makes life dear ; in a single instant, a thousand ties were severed, that were precious as her hearts strings, and her desolate bosom bled at every pore.

Having passed some days in these heart-rending reflections, the best course she thought she could adopt in her present situation was, to repose her sorrows on the benignant bosom of Eternal Providence, who never abandons his creatures when they are faithful to Him. Full of this reflection, she suffered herself to be entirely led by him, who had been hitherto so unfortunate a guide, but whose cares became unceasing, to anticipate her wishes and to lighten her chagrin. From Egypt he led her into Syria, and thence to Aleppo, where his friends resided.

The story of the spouses had been bruited in Cairo ; in the town of Alexandria, they were talked of universally, and their story went before them to Aleppo. On their entering Aleppo, the citizens assembled to see the gentle lady wedded to the Turk, whom she had mistaken for a Spanish officer, who had castles of much eminence in Spain. The personal merit of this gentle lady, which was speedily diffused, excited the compassion of the Catholics especially, who rivalled one another in their efforts to console her ; her misfortunes, however, were not terminated yet. Rumour circulated in Aleppo, that the Spaniard was as rich as Croesus, and this was quite sufficient to awaken the cupidity of robbers, as they termed them, who thirsted for his gold. Let that be as it may, it is certain that the Turk was discovered in his chamber, a mutilated carcass, and that the perpetrators

of the murder could never be discovered. Quickly acquainted with this new calamity, which filled up the measure of her adverse fortune, the affliction of the widow was excessive. She saw her infant and herself, who were equally defenceless, and equally ignoring what in the world should become of them, deprived of all subsistence in a country of Turks. But when the tale of bricks was doubled, Moses came. Some Maronite women who had visited Aleppo, invited her to Libanus, to which they were returning; in a country almost altogether Catholic; they told her she should enjoy the exercise of her religion, and there too all her wants should be supplied. These hopes in her present situation, induced her to go with them. The Maronite women led her to the hamlet of Antoura. A widow the best provided for of all the villagers, took her to her house, and took care of her.

It was at Antoura that we became acquainted with her: her conduct has been always extremely edifying and exemplary. In speaking of her misfortunes, she expressed such resignation to the will of Heaven as drew tears from the eyes of the people who surrounded her. Virtues of so rare a character, gained her such golden opinions from the Maronites in general, that they rivalled one another in endeavouring to render her every service in their power, and laboured to make her forget her sad adventures.

One of our missionaries was honoured with her confidence, who took particular care of the education of her child.

After the mother and the son had spent some years at Antoura, a propitious opportunity presented itself for their return to their father land. The lady resolved to

improve the occasion. Our missionaries, far from dissuading her, were aiding in her embarkation on board a good vessel, persuaded as they were, that in the bosom of her family she should find more solace for her individual afflictions, and a better education for her son, than in a country in which she was a stranger, and where, in spite of all attentions, most of the comforts of European life were unattainable. We have had no news of her since then, but we have reason to believe that heaven, ever faithful to the souls who submit themselves to Providence, has brought the friendless mother and her infant son to the haven for which the exiles yearned so frequently.

I have related what our archives acquaint us with, concerning the establishment of our mission at Antoura. We still continue to cultivate this soil, once irrigated with the blood of Jesus Christ, with all the consolation it is capable of yielding. The contagious malady which emptied the principal towns of Provence of our brethren of Jesus, when they calmly, fearlessly, and generously exposed their lives in the service of the plague-sick, has not spared us in the Levant; their zealous charity, in succouring the victims of the plague, hath caused them to merit, in many instances, the crown of martyrdom. Sir, in sending missioners to every quarter of the christian universe, forget not our missions of the Levant, those of Syria, and Palestine especially, which were infinitely dear to St. Ignatius, and which deserve your special protection, were it only upon this account.

The mission of Damascus, which I have quitted recently, so eminently merits my making you acquainted with it, a compendious account of the state in which I left it, with

the present situation of that great and famous city, cannot fail to interest you. The flourishing condition of religion in Damascus, in former times, cannot possibly be recalled without the bitterest regret ; for alas ! nothing remains now but ruins of that greatness ! excepting Jerusalem. At the birth of catholicity, it was the first that was watered with Christian blood. Thither St. Paul was conveying their sentence of proscription, when, suddenly enveloped in an effulgence of celestial light, he was hurled prostrate on the earth, prone and blind. They shew the locality of the fall and apparition, which is very near the city, as well as the mansion of the faithful Ananias—the cave to which, in time of persecution, he retired—the gate at which the evasion of St. Paul was effected by the faithful. These can be all pointed out by assiduous ciceroni at the present time. These primitive persecutions only heralded in the triumphs of religion. Damascus, in succeeding ages, became, as it were, the theatre of Christianity, where she maintained a lofty attitude with no small glory, till those disastrous times, when, fostered by Imperial sunshine, Schism raised its serpent head in her bosom. The Arians, the Macedonians, the Nestorians, the Eutychians, but Mahometanism above all, dusked the splendor of this church, and made its lustre disappear. Nevertheless, some gleams of her original radiance continued hanging round her in resplendant festoons in the times of the Saracens and of St. John of Damascus. But since the Turks obtained the mastery, that is, during the last 200 years, Damascus has become simply a vast assemblage of conflicting sects, raging around—rending religion just like so many monsters. The superstition of Mahomet is the most potent, and most prevalent of these. We



may venture to describe it as absorbing all the others ; for, favouring as it does the brutal passions of the human heart, it is incessantly attracting the severed disciples of the schisms which subdivide Christianity in this country. Of schismatic Christians, three several nations are recognised in this place. The Greeks maintain the error of Marcus the Ephesian, a follower of Photius ; the Surians, that of Dioscorides ; the Armenians, the errors of Nestorius. Unconducted by the light of true religion as they are, at the test of persecution, they all delapse alike into a precipice, which is infinitely more frightful than their first condition, and passing easily from error into infidelity, they join the sectaries of Mahomet ; insomuch, that amongst half a million of inhabitants, perhaps ten thousand Christians was our utmost number.

Such was the state of religion in Damascus, when, a hundred years ago, our missionaries arrived there. Three catholic families was all we counted, the Maronites excepted, who form a very petty nation, and who have always been conformed to the faith of Rome. This was not from any want of missionaries of zeal. There were Cordeliers and Capucins in Damascus, anterior to ourselves. But they had not succeeded in extending the labours of their mission any farther than the Maronites ; they had not, in reality, presumed to undertake it. They served in the capacity of rectors to the Maronites, when the patriarch was pleased to permit them that privilege. We began our toils simply by establishing a public school, in which little children are taught, of whom the fathers and mothers were in time instructed by their infants, and in the course of years profound prejudices, engraved in



their heart by their hatred of Franks, insensibly disappeared.

Human respect, and the dread of persecution, retained many in their errors for a length of time, or even caused them to apostatise at a period subsequent to their accession to the true faith. And it was not until that patriarch's days, whom the Grecians call *Civile*, who occupied the office five and thirty years ago, and who shewed favour to the Catholics—it was only under the government of this person that the Christians began to declare themselves decidedly in favour of religion. But when this patriarch was dead, and persecutions were imposed on the shepherds, one part of the flock was scattered, the other compelled to prevaricate. The missionaries never discontinued their exhortations to the Catholics during those stormy times, sometimes publicly and sometimes privately to stand fast and not to stagger in the faith. Even to our own times, in which, to our surprise, by an order of the Porte which dismissed the schismatic, we beheld the prelate of the Catholics elevated to the patriarchal see. He only held the seat a single month, and even then by proxy. The schismatic received a countermand which was precisely opposed to the preceding, and by which he was established in Damascus. The Catholic patriarch, finding it thus imperative upon him to retire, removed to a monastery of Greek religious to reside, where, on the mountain of anti-Libanus, near Seyde, he continues to abide.

This novel revolution afforded a convincing argument in favour of the schismatic, but triumphant party, in the opinion of the weak, by which party the latter were

speedily absorbed. Those who remained firm sought concealment in their domiciles, where they watched till heaven should give to our affairs a more favourable aspect. The aid of Heaven was not long withheld. He who holds in his hand the hearts of great men, disposed the bosom of the bashaw who governs the country in favour of the Catholics, as well as of the missionaries, insomuch that the churches of the latter were permitted to be opened, and Christians permitted to frequent them—an event perfectly unparalleled ever since the Turks obtained dominion of the country. He annulled a contract, moreover, which was passed by the Catholics in spite of them during their incarceration, by which they were engaged to give 30,000 crowns as a forfeit for every time they should listen to the missionaries. Since that time, that is to say, in three years' space, the rapid progress of the Catholic religion has been quite incredible. I can assure you, in my own regard, that no single year hath hitherto elapsed, in which I have not had the consolation and felicity of seeing a hundred persons, at least, returning to the bosom of the truth. Not that we have not had to bide the pelting of pitiless storms in the absence of the Bashaw; for, as four months at least are annually spent by him in conducting the caravan of pilgrims to Mecca, this time was always employed in periodically persecuting us. But we have emerged with victory from these difficulties, in consequence of the measures we adopted.

The species of persecution inflicted on the Christians, by the Mussulmen, is neither death nor torment, so much as pecuniary penalties, which they please to call *Avanies*. When Christians are accused with reference to religion,

'Tis a custom here to seize and bastinado such personages as happen to be paramount amongst the countrymen of the accused, a contribution is then required of them, which is impartially and strictly levied upon all the nation, whether they be Syrians, or Greeks, or what you will. For some consecutive years, when the Bashaw had departed on his pilgrimage to Mecca, they invariably accused the Catholics of having become Franks, and of praying with the latter, and so enormous an *avanie* was imposed upon the Catholics in consequence, that the state of indigence to which it reduced them, was absolutely more appalling than death. In order to remedy so great an evil, I had the honour of writing to his Excellency the French Ambassador, requesting his protection of the persecuted Catholics, as well as that he by his influence at the Porte, might procure us an order, by which, not the Catholics alone, but that all Christians indiscriminately, might be the subjects of all such future *avanies*, as it should please them to impose on us. His Excellency was pleased to promise in the answer with which he honoured me, that with reference to the Bashaw, no stone should be left unturned, which possibly could bring my project into operation, and that he should second his petition, with a present of a nature which was very likely to insure success.

The schismatics, according to their custom, having a little after accused the Catholics of being Franks, an *avany* amounting to many purses,\* was imposed upon the latter. 'Twas then in pursuance of my project, that I prevailed upon the principals to require that this fine

\* £62 10s. constitute a purse.

should be indiscriminately levied upon all the Christians, since after all, no difference is ever made between Christian and Christian by the Turks, who, as to whether you be Syrian, or Frank, Catholic, or Greek, put no interrogatories. In this way the schismatics have been disarmed of the instrument they used so frequently, and with so much success, to injure and impede the Catholics. We anticipate the continuous subsistence of this law, at least as long as the administration of the present Bashaw shall endure.

Befriended by a rule so pacific and auspicious, we exercise our ministry, we preach in our church, and celebrate our sacred mysteries within it, not only as we do in Tripoly, or in Said, in which we are protected by the Gonfalon of France, but precisely as we should perform them at Paris, hence, like water from a well, it flows as a necessary consequence that schismatics are converted, and the sacraments received—hence, public and private instructions are bestowed, producing wonderful effects in hearts that hunger for the word of God.

At our sermons and at the explanations we give them of the Gospel, how often do we see them moved by a touching word to tears; how much are we affected in hearing them so frequently striking their bosoms and sobbing during Mass, especially at the consecration, and at the communion of the Priest. The schismatics themselves, who are sometimes present, are frequently affected to conversion. Should these happy times continue for a few years more, the few rebels who remain will be unable to resist us. But in cultivating a mission such as this, the labours and the cares incumbent on the missionaries are indescribable; resolving the important

questions with which the Catholics continually ply them, instructing and refuting the heretics, causing to come to an amicable end those various lawsuits, which are sometimes agitated amongst the faithful, and in which they will take no judges but ourselves, hearing the general confessions of the converts during the course of the week, and the confessions of the others the live-long day, on the eves of sabbaths and of festivals. Such is an abridgment of labours, which keep the missionary's mind for ever on the stretch. The mission of Damascus is peculiarly painful, because without counting the Catholics, who are good souls, crowds are continually coming in from their want of missionaries at home, from the villages and towns in the vicinity.

In giving a succinct description of Damascus, I shall content myself with telling you, that it is quite as large as Paris, and the third city in the Turkish provinces; perhaps it would be wealthier still, were it under the dominion of a Christian king; it has several mosques of surprising beauty, above all one surpassing all the others, and quite amazing for its magnitude, which is ornamented magnificently with marble of a snowy whiteness, and which was erected by the early Christians; it was the metropolitan church originally.

The situation of Damascus is perhaps one of the finest in the world. The city rises in a noble plain, sloping sufficiently to give its pellucid waters currency. And so abundant is this limpid water, that we may aver, no city in the world is better watered than Damascus. A chrysal fountain mingles with the glistening stream, that descending from the neighbouring mountains, enters the plain, in that part which lying towards the rising sun,



is lost in the remote horizon. This confluence of waters constitutes a river. Where this enchanting plain commences, Damascus elevates its pinnacles. Pausing before it ventures to the town, the noble river is separated into seven branches, one of which accommodates the city, the others irrigate the plain.

When I first saw the spot from which the river diramifies, I was stricken with astonishment: viewing the solidity and art which the work exhibits, I was ravished into admiration.

But of all the people I interrogated, there was no one that could inform me as to the period, or the person by whom this marvel was constructed. By means of this, so copious quantity of water, every abode is abundantly supplied; it is so husbanded too, that from the bosom of resplendent basins, like columns of silver it shoots up in a thousand glistening fountains, in the interior and exterior of the several dwellings. It was requisite to construct subterraneous canals, at incalculable cost, to conduct it to the different departments of the town. These canals, if we may so express ourselves, are covered roads of sufficient magnitude, to suffer two or three persons to walk side by side.

The other rivers which wind in semicircles through the plain, irrigate a world of orchards, so profuse of fruit, that no where is the quantity more abundant, no where can the quality be more delicious.

A Christian cannot possess a single inch of earth throughout this vast, this magnificent campaign. His solitary resource is in his industry, in carrying on commerce, and in manufacturing silks: with reference to this, the Turks are accustomed to reason very seriously,



we do not suffer you, they tell the Christians, to possess any landed property whatever,\* one third of your time is consumed in festivals and sabbath-days, on which you never labour; we compel you, excluding the avanies, to pay large sums of money for permission to make wine, as well as for the great privilege enjoyed by you, of praying in a church. In spite of the pains which we take, with regard to you, your houses are as good, your diet is as excellent, and your garments perhaps are more sumptuous than ours, yet we pay no taxes and have landed property, and but one or two festivals that interrupt our labours; how in the world is this miracle effected!

The only answer that the Christians give them is, that an overwatching providence is the giver of increase, That the Master whom we have the felicity of serving is emphatically a good Master, who even in this world, often recompences us for such tribulations as we endure for him.

\* A century ago, the Catholics of Ireland were similarly circumstanced.

SKETCHES  
OF A  
JOURNEY TO MOUNT LIBANUS,  
SENT TO FATHER FLEURIAU.

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My Rev. Father,—I do myself the honour of sending to you now the account which you required of my journey to Mount Libanus. Other missionaries of ours, I know full well, previously performed the journey, who, doubtless, did not fail to send you a recital. My desire to do you pleasure, makes me heartily hope that they omitted some particulars which you may find in the following. Be that as it may, my obedience will plead with you, and quite extenuate my want of merit.

Accompanied by Father Bonamour, your correspondent quitted Tripoli the 13th of October. Three Maronites from Mount Libanus conducted us, and for four successive days we continually advanced, till, on the vigil of the fifth, we arrived by the moonlight at the foot of Mount Libanus. 'Twas 10 o'clock at night when we entered a village denominated Argos, situated at six leagues distance from the cedars. We were obliged to pass the night upon an earthen floor, incessantly assailed by a keen wind, extremely strong and bitter, which came through the interstices of a cabin, or rather cage, composed of reeds. We resumed our route two hours before

the dawn. The road selected by our leaders was full of inequalities, in which our progress was little, our labour great.

We were passing by a village entitled Antour'in, when the lord of the village, who had seen us at a distance, invited us to dine with him : half a league from his house, we repented our refusal. Gelid showers of icy rain, the coldest and most copious we had ever witnessed, accompanied by hail and rolling thunder, poured upon us for two continuous hours, during which we could find nothing like a refuge to shield us from its violence.

Our clothes were penetrated instantaneously. We plunged, at every pace, into mud that rose above our knees, or were compelled to ford the mountain ravines, in which the rapid torrents, descending with impetuosity, threatened our destruction every instant, as we struggled with their fury, just like so many feeble reeds. The rain, which composed a river at our feet, was converted into snow upon the neighbouring mountains. After enduring inexplicable fatigues, we came at length to the Carmelite convent of Marserkis. In that deplorable condition, whatever we required was cordially supplied to us, and you may conceive how acceptable such succour must have been in a plight so pitiable as ours. It stands at the foot of a rock which rises above it to a height so frightful, that no human foot has ever pressed its apex ; the eagles or vultures that retire to its recesses or sail round its stupendous altitude being the only animals that rise so high. Grottoes have been burrowed in the basis of this rock, and these constitute a portion of the monastery. Nature and art combine to make this monastery commodious. Imagine our being led into a

round little bedroom, of which the concave ceiling was the solid stone forming the foundation of the peak. The chapel is a grotto of considerable size, which, though fashioned by the hand of nature, is as perfect as if chiselled by some skilful excavator. An ever-flowing fountain of the purest water which issues from the rock after passing through all offices that need the lymph waters a garden of legumes. A sojourn in Marserkis is delicious in summer, six months in the year are spent there by the Carmelites ; but the snows and winds that come pouring from Mount Libanus make the winter so insupportable, that those gentlemen retire at the first appearance of frost, remaining in Tripoli till Easter.

We were conducted next day to the cedars of Mount Libanus. As, after the recent rains, the roads were indifferently dried, we had some difficulty in traversing the league that separates Maserkis from the cedars, which we could see at a distance.

We contemplated them at leisure. The cedars stand upon a little mountain, whose summit is a plain of considerable extent. This plain is crowned by domineering mountains which ascend above its head, hoar and lofty, and covered with snow to the skies.

The cedars celebrated amongst all mankind, stand upon the plain in considerable number. Of this grand family, more of the members are young and small, than great and ancient : I counted but a dozen of extraordinary bulk ; we measured the most thick ; we embraced their rugged rind six times ; their circuit was equivalent to six times the measure of our horizontal arms. Imagine their enormous magnitude ! some, having grown a little from the ground, had then branched into five or six stupendous trees, so great

in girth two men could scarce embrace them. But when these trees, a forest in themselves, form a junction at their summits, the enormous extent occupied by their capacious boughs is surprising. Their gigantic elevation is proportioned to their breadth. Some of those travellers, who take such care to grave their name in every place they visit, have made great incisions on the larger cedars. A salutary balm in the form of gum, which is very efficacious in the drying of wounds, exudes from these incisions.

At the foot of the largest of the cedars embrowned by the shadow of its foliage, four altars are perceived of massive stone. On the day of the transfiguration of the Lord, attended by a train of bishops, priests, and monks, and perhaps 6,000 Maronites, the patriarch is seen repairing to this place to celebrate "the feast of the cedars." Though this feast is celebrated by the Maronites on the day of the transfiguration of the Lord, it by no means follows as a consequence, that the Maronites believe, as some presume to tell us, that it was on their mountain that our Saviour was transfigured. Its expressly asserted in their office for the day, that the scene of that marvel was Mount Thabor. That very erroneous notion originated in Thabor's connection with a family of mountains, which all possess a common name, viz. Libanus, and anti-Libanus.

You may see the mountains of Libanus extending from the side of the sea to the sources of the Jourdan: you find them stretching from Carmel, as you travel on till they sink into a flat at two days journey from Damascus. The mountain chain of Anti-Libanus advances farther inland; it is divided from that of Libanus by a flat, extensive plain, which begins at the Balbeck side,

at two days journey from Damascus. The acclivities of Anti-Libanus receive this appellation, because the kindred chains confront each other, and the latter appears to contemplate the opposite.

The air that circulates upon the plain upon which those giant cedars tower, is so cold and venomous, that no one ever is tempted to fix their residence upon it; and yet its situation is really enchanting. It is covered with a mantle of medicinal herbage, and there may the traveller cull the rarest simples.

Game of every kind is common there, the most formidable foe that wide wilderness—that mute and unpeopled solitude affords, is the vulture, and the voracious birds which are a kin to it. The grateful earth would be fertile, were it cultivated. A species of bush, producing a black barberry of very pleasant flavour, abounds upon the mountain.

Libanus was at one time clothed with aspiring cedars. However, you will not find any at the present day except on the plain which I have spoken of, and on another mountain which is near Caunobin. All joiners' work is made of cedar-wood in Libanus, the operatives of the place are very skilful workmen. The succeeding day we left the monastery of Marserkis to go about a league to that of Marelicha. The vicar and two others of the monks attended us. The monastery of Marelicha, that is, of Eliseus, is situated at the foot of a tremendous mountain, and on the margin of a river entitled Nahr Gadischa, or the sacred river. It flows through a very narrow valley of exceeding depth, whose sides are ornamented with tall pines and gigantic oaks and vines, in the depth of whose recesses you may see the rapid waters



glistening like shining ebony. At 30 paces from this river, you see on either side a chain of mountains rise which form tremendous masses of naked rocks.

The interior of these mountains have been hollowed, by the hand of nature, into caves of unknown capacity—cells of solitary Cenobites at one time, who chose these arid rocks, here ascending so sublimely in their nakedness, as the only worldly witnesses of virtue which was almost unparalleled, and the uninterrupted rigour of perennial penance. The tears of these sequestered saints, which have mingled so often with its waters, have given to the river which we have been speaking of the title of the holy river. Its source is situated in the mountains of Libanus. When looking at these caves, and this river, making its way for ever glistening and gliding through the desert like some sable serpent, feelings of compunction fill the soul—a secret love of penitence is inspired insensibly, as well as of compassion for those sensual souls, who, for a few delusive joys, for some feverish transports for fairy wealth, exchange their sterling gold, the glorious “birthright of their hopes in Heaven.”

The superior of the monastery of Elizeus received us in a manner the most cordial. The monastery consists of 20 Maronites. They were the only persons that we met with that deserved the appellation of religious.

They were established here by a pious priest, named Abdulus, five and twenty years ago—a person particularly assiduous in consulting Father Nicolas Bazire, as to the form, constitution, and conduct of this society. He was their first superior. He was taken from his monastery and consecrated bishop, in opposition to his own desire. Our mission of Antoura is established in his

diocese. His successor in his monastery is Father Gabriel, a man of the utmost modesty, as well as the greatest piety. He is universally esteemed and honored by Turks, Greeks, and Maronites, in consequence of his profound intimacy with Arabic.

In this monastery of Maronites, the noviceship is two years in length ; flesh is never eaten by the inmates, who are very poorly dressed ; they chant the office in the noon of night, and pass the greater portion of the day upon the fresh and sunny mould, engaged in the wholesome labours of the husbandman. An account of their conscience is given their superior evening and morn diurnally. They observe their rules with unabated rigour, and, above all, maintain unbroken silence and perpetual fast. Except their brothers of the cloister, they seldom see a human being. The foot of a female has never passed the threshold of their church. If any of the inmates happen to relax in this penitential life, and give the lie to his vocation, he is at once advised by the abbot to retire, though the years of his profession were a dozen. The superior can give a dispensation for conventual vows.

We departed with our guides on the morning of the 20th, to proceed to Cannobin, two leagues from the monastery of Eliseus. We saw, upon our route, the remains of many monasteries, which Cenobites inhabited in anterior times, and which, deserted by the monks, have been ruined by the Metouali, who are a sect of heretical Mahometans.

Many of these mouldering ruins are perched upon the summit of steep and lofty rocks, at such an alarming elevation, that you cannot comprehend the possibility of

reaching them. We entered a chapel chiseled in the rock, which had been excavated very skilfully, and in which two altars stood. An image of the Virgin stood on the one, on the other was an image of Saint Antony. We saw some desert cells beside the chapel, in which the situation of the Cenobites must have been very incommodious. At the foot of these mountains, flows the holy river ; its greatest length is little more than 18 miles.

The patriarch of the Maronites resides at Cannobin. They received us with the utmost hospitality. The monks are few in number, and indifferently lodged, and still greater poverty appears in their clothes and mode of life. The patriarch lives with some Maronite bishops, and with the monks of the house, in the greatest harmony, and with a simplicity and purity of manners perfectly exemplary. The slightest faults are punished with severity. Strangers are received in a most charitable manner, from a spirit of hospitality, with all this poverty ! The patriarch was clothed in a scarlet-coloured habit, which was turned up with fur, under which he wore a purple soutane : a dress that was remarkable for nothing but its modesty.

The church is dedicated to the Virgin Mary ; its age, the patriarch informed us, was fourteen centuries. The church is a tremendous cave which has been decorated and devoted to the service of religion. It is adorned with pictures of different qualities. The patriarch pointed out to our attention, as we loitered through them, the portraits of Innocent the Eleventh and Louis the Fourteenth. We recited the nocturnal office in the choir, as well as the office for the day, which was said by the sodality with much seeming unction. Their liturgy

is very ancient. It is written in Syrian, or ancient Syriac, and a very little part in Arabic, which is transcribed in Syriac characters, denominated Kerchora. The cells of the monks are grottoes near the church. The Brothers are exposed to the inclemencies of the seasons, in passing, as well in summer as in winter, from their grottoes to their church. The patriarch led us to a room designated the Chamber of the Jesuits. These Jesuits were three, Fathers John Baptiste Elien, John Bruno, and Jerome Dandini. The two first were sent by the 13th Gregory, to make the Maronites receive the decrees of the Council of Trent, and Clement 8th despatched the third to make the bishops, priests and patriarch, assembled in a synod, renounce the errors of a schismatical council. The Council of Trent was accordingly received, and the schism was proscribed. During our sojourn, we were always honoured by an invitation, on the part of the patriarch, to dine with the religious and himself. Frugality was perfectly observed on these occasions. Legumes prepared in oil, beet roots, salt fish, and dry discoloured bread, composed the dinner that they gave us ; but their wine was of a quality so excellent, that no better can be made in France.

The Patriarch pressed us earnestly, employing many arguments, to induce us to remain some time longer in his monastery, but, the day of our departure being determined on, after saying the nocturnal office with the choir, and celebrating mass, we took our leave of him. We had the honour of receiving from the patriarch his own peculiar ornaments, which, indeed, are exceedingly becoming. We besought his benediction, and departed.

He gave us his deacon as a guide, for the roads are

very difficult to follow. At a little distance from the monastery, we visited a chapel dedicated to St. Marina. Filled as it is with the odour of her sanctity, the deepest veneration is retained, and indeed diffused, through the surrounding country by the memory of this virgin.

No one entertains the slightest doubt in this place as to the circumstances of her life. Inspired by heaven, as historians tell us, the virgin enveloped her beauty in a cowl, and completely concealed her sex in the coarse weeds of a monastic. Girded in this rude habit, the beautiful recluse devoutly served her Saviour for successive years in austerity and penitence. She was accused of an intrigue with a female in the neighbourhood, and condemned to suffer the severest penalty by her superior's sentence, and in that cave, too, which is now a chapel dedicated to her memory. But that highly-exalted, uncreated, and benignant Being whom she served, as alone supremely worthy of her adoration, who always condescends to look with an interested eye upon his servants, made her innocence, when she sunk into the slumber of the grave, as obvious as the day-star when he sinks to the horizon, and distinguished her virtues even in this world by the miracles operated at her tomb.

Having offered up our prayers at this venerated shrine, we set forward for St. Anthony, which is at two leagues distance from Cannobin. We ascended and descended a mountain, the most rugged I ever had encountered while traversing these intervening leagues. St. Anthony's priory stands upon the coast beside a high perpendicular acclivity. At this time, thirty Cenobites were living in the house, similar in every sense to those whom I have described so recently. Abdulus, the bishop, who, before



his episcopacy, was their founder and their first superior, received us with the utmost kindness. That prelate leads the life of a saint in this establishment ; his lodgings are as humble as the simplest religious, and, though the life of his monastics is sufficiently austere, the bishop lives with even more austerity than they do. His only distinction is the colour of his dress, which is invariably violet.

He kept us in the monastery two successive days, that we might see the house and environs more completely. This convent consists of two separate divisions, and the distance that divides them is by no means inconsiderable. Each division has its church, but of these the greater is selected when they celebrate the office ; in either church its neatness is its only ornament. We were conducted by the prelate to some caves in the vicinity, which are all so many chapels. One, surpassing all the others for its beauty and extent, is dedicated to St. Michael. Three altars stand within it, and for those two religious men who minister at them, there are two little chambers contained within the cave. On the face of that mountain which is opposite these grottoes, you see the openings of others, where two hermits lead a solitary life, who never quit these caves, nor speak a word to any one, unless haply to the prior, when opening their consciences to his inspection diurnally.

No one can be possibly more edified than I was by the sublime series of pious acts which I had seen the religious of this monastery perform. And now, having spent two days in this establishment, I took my leave of Bishop Abdulus, who gave me what was indispensable, a guide ; for, without a guide in mountains edged with



precipices of the height I had to cross, it would have been impossible to arrive by unknown roads at Argos.

Tripoli, the termination of my journey, is only at the distance of four leagues from Argos. The space that separates them is a uniform plain of decidedly the most agreeable description, crowned with graceful olives and with groups of trees of many different species. At length, I happily arrived at Tripoli, from which I had set out. In Tripoli, thank heaven for the favour, I immediately resumed the exercises of our missions; for, at present, contagious diseases increase our occupations. The inseparable peril of employments, such as theirs, has no terror whatsoever for the high and heroic courage of our missionaries. One would be ashamed to fail in imitating them. As we are continually in need of the heavenly assistance, we hope that when diurnally you offer the immaculate oblation, you supplicate heaven in behalf of us.

A LETTER FROM ALEPPO  
ON THE RAMADAN,

WITH TRAITS OF THE TRAVELS OF THE WRITER.

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My Rev. Father,—I find it obligatory upon me to make you acquainted with all such curious and remarkable occurrences as I happen to encounter in the countries I shall traverse. I have laid down the following plan, in order to fulfill my obligations. I shall be contented with examining attentively the positions of the places, the situation of the cities, the changes in the atmospheric temperature, while merely travelling, but, once become permanent, resident, and stationary any where, the manners of the people, the customs of the country, all that relates to religion more particularly, become my objects for especial study. Any hours of idleness which my more essential duties may leave me, are completely occupied by such a study, a study in my esteem which is not unworthy of a missionary. As you are at once a Frenchman and a Jesuit, you cannot fail to feel pleased in reading my recital. Foreign manners in juxtaposition with the manners of the French, afford a contrast which is excessively flattering to France, and when contrasted with her rivals, our holy religion invariably triumphs, as she always derives new splendour from this parallel or this contrast, as we should call it, so glorious to her sanctity. In my narrative I shall mention nothing

which I have not seen, and with your permission I shall close this letter with a few adventures which shall shew you the extravagancies of superstition, and the patience which the missionary must employ in dealing with its partizans. They will fill you full of pity, for the miserable condition of Christianity in Asia, and for the melancholy fate of so many souls, who with the best dispositions in the world, perish daily for the want of help. I shall commence by instituting a comparison between the Turkish and the Christian lents, and the Turkish and the Christian Easter.

The Grand Ramadan, or Turkish Lent, is a solemn religious observance, which the Koran prescribes. It continues for a month, or a moon, to use the language of the country. It excites no surprise that Mahomet instituted this observance, tintured with the Christian religion as he was. False religions do themselves the honour of imitating the true, at least in some particulars. The season selected for the fast is generally the winter, you will ultimately see the reason. This year they selected in Aleppo, the moon of January. They fired four canon from the castle, at 3 in the afternoon, the moment the moon of December disappeared, to apprise the Mussulmen that the Ramadan began next day. They fast as follows: to eat, to drink, or smoke tobacco, is prohibited from the hour in the morning in which you can distinguish a white thread from a black thread, until after sun down. This circumstance of the white and black thread, taken literally, gives great advantage to the purblind people, compared to those whose sight is faultless, of which they do not scruple to avail themselves. As soon as the sun is down, the Marabouts, whose

business it is, from the summit of the minarets to call the Mussulmans to prayer, and whose voices serve instead of bells in Turkey, utter frightful cries, from their elevated stations. Every soul in the city at this signal, resumes his pipe and commences eating. This first repast succeeding sun-set, is commonly a light collation ; assemblies succeed and promenades, and diversions of every description. The streets are filled with people, a general illumination follows, the gates of the city are lying open, and as they imagine that every thing is permitted them, because they fast, many disorders seemed to be sanctioned by this penitence. Insomuch that the Christians commonly remark, that in the Ramadan the Mussulmen are mad, and the former are then more than ever on their guard, to avoid all collision with the Turks, believing if they suffered any evil at their hands, that they should have very little chance of justice.

After rambling through the city in the moon light, they eventually return to their houses and sumptuously banquet, and hold high festival for some hours before the white thread can be distinguished from the black one. The viands on their board combine delicacy with abundance : The Mahometans reserve their most delicious meats for the period of the Ramadan ; you needs must grant me, that this is a very pleasant mode of keeping Lent. When you ask a Mussu'man why he eats such exquisite and costly viands, “ ’tis because I’m fasting, he exclaims, “ Were not the season penitential, I’d have frugal fare ;” when day is dawning and the feast is done, they go to sleep, not indeed in the interior of their houses, but recumbent upon divans that are laid before their doors, that the world may perceive how

penitent they are, and unless very urgent business break their slumbers, they are seldom seen in public till the afternoon ; thus the rigour of their penitence consists in turning day into night, and in feasting on the richest viands. You know many men in Europe who practice this austerity the whole year round, but who, unlike the Turks, seldom seek to sanctify themselves by such observances.

Our fasters of the Levant take no small pains to maintain the most frightful mask of severity, and melancholy : they walk with a grave pace, with dejected extenuated rueful visages, to which they can give the necessary cast with great facility, for in such grimaces the most aukward Asiatic is certain to succeed. To compliment them then upon their good complexion, or improved appearance, would be dreadfully offensive ; they seem doggedly determined to appear devout, no matter what it may cost.

Justice is never worse administered than during Lent, offences are attended with impunity in the Ramadan. Having suffered an assault, if you summon the offender, if you denounce and accuse him to the Cadi, that equitable judge replies, he struck you, but poor fellow, dont you see he is fasting, look at his visage, it is pitiable, the slightest punishment would cause his death ; this fasting enfeebles the body and the soul : for my own part I have ceased to be myself, the inanition of the stomach worketh madness of the brain ; this defendant was insane when he treated you in this way. What will you have me do with him ; you yourself may be the judge, you see he is without strength, and scarce capable of standing ; justice would visit him at present in the

shape of destruction, it would be criminal." The accuser, if a Christian, pretends to be persuaded by these reasons, and if he be unsatisfied by this procedure, he has at least the comfort of complaining: if the plaintiff be a Mussulman, the reasonings of the Cadi bring conviction to the hearer, who plays in this very pretty comedy the part of faster. It is thus that law suits terminate in these penitential times, and they terminate in this way in those instances especially in which the defendant contrives to cause a sum of money to pass unobserved into the judge's hands; this excites his compassion for his feebleness unfailingly. Persons sometimes appear before the tribunal, however, whose tempers are so stormy that they cannot be convinced by the reasonings of the Cadi, but who are doggedly determined on obtaining satisfaction proportioned to the injury; but these impracticable people seldom bless their bargain, of which there was an instance in the last Ramadan.

A Mussulman arraigned a co-religionist, from whom he had received a serious affront, before a public tribunal. The judge who was corrupted had a tendency to clemency, and to have some authority for sheltering the criminal, whom he was resolute to save, he made great use of the reasons which the fast afforded. The plaintiff turned a deaf ear to these arguments, however. He pertinaciously persisted in repeating that the criminal was able to sustain the punishment deserved, he grew warm with his subject, his voice grew louder, he spoke with fire, vivacity, and energy. The Cadi, who at first was entirely at a loss for some reasonable argument to oppose to so much logic, adopted a singular but effective method of attack. "Your lungs are very strong," he ultimately replied



addressing the plaintiff very coolly, “ you dont seem to fast ; at least you hardly keep the fast as well as we do, since you speak so vociferously and evince so little of the feebleness which oppresses the defendant : so saying, he caused him to be laid upon his belly and beaten on the feet, as a heinous violator of Mahometan commandments, in having failed to observe the Grand Ramādan. There was very little justice in the judge’s arguments, but then he was imperative, and the accuser could only answer by his cries.

These thirty days of penitence are followed by three days of festival, which are announced, like the others, by four cannon shots. You may see these turbaned people, on the vigil of the festival, that is, on the last evening of lent, employed in the bazaars and public places, in setting up divans and in covering them with brilliant-coloured carpeting and cushions. Recumbent upon these they eat in public—recumbent upon these they receive their visitors, and calmly contemplate the attitudes of those who figure upon ropes, an amusement, which, from its popularity, eclipses every other. There is one very pleasant circumstance connected with these feats, which is, that you pay nothing for beholding them ; besides, the spectator may become an actor, i. e. you may purchase the permission of performing in your turn by the payment of a little coin.

Two Turks are seen coming forward to the centre of the arena ; they support a man upon their shoulders, whom they deposit in a seat, which has three corners ; this triangle swings suspended from the dome by twelve ropes, four at every corner. The moment that it begins to move upward, sonorous trumpets sound, and other

instruments of music play, which, mingled with the rolling of the drums forming the base of the music, accompany this ascension. Amid this melody, the man ascends in a few minutes to the very vault, which is as high as the roofs of the loftiest cathedrals in France. Those who have most agility and hardihood, by stretching forth their feet in this position grasp the ropes that extend across the dome. They let themselves down from their elevated seat, and swing by their hands from those lofty cords, where they twist and turn for some time, and then, by the assistance of some other ropes, slowly descend unto the earth : the music ceases the moment they alight, and the people testify their approbation by clapping universally. There are less elevated places for those that have less strength and courage. It only costs the third of a piastre or something less than ten pence English, to shew one's self in public this way. An aga presides, by whom the money is received. Such are the amusements of the more mature, from which the young are not excluded, though the striplings have peculiar pleasures. Imagine for a moment an enormous wheel, so extensive, that it fills the edifice, being only a foot from the ceiling in the highest place and a foot from the floor where it is lowest, being placed perpendicularly. An infinitude of seats are attached to its circumference, which are filled with a multitude of boys and girls. Imagine the mighty revolutions of this wheel, which goes round with astonishing rapidity, conveying the chairs which are so suspended as always to maintain their perpendicular, now up on one side and now down upon the other, with the children now passing along the loft and now sweeping along the floor, now under the feet and anon at the very summit of all

the others. Besides these chairs, there are certain little towers composed of horizontal planks which turn on a pivot. In these little towers, or, more graphically, churns, as in so many nests, the children are placed who are less than ten, who, while peeping from their churns, pass quickly in review before the assembly. This is the principal employment of the Mussulmans from 8 in the morning till 10 o'clock at night, during the three days which constitute the Turkish easter. The everlasting hum of such a multitude of people, with their shouts, cries, and exclamations, the creaking, groaning, straining of the vast machines, hammocks, wheels, and ropes, heard above the voices of the crowds perpetually, rather make a spectacle of horror, than of pleasure. Christians keep their Easter in a different fashion. Let us begin with the Christian Lent.

Living in Aleppo, we are almost at the portals of that celebrated Antioch, where the chair of truth and the Apostolic See were established by St. Peter. This is the primal city in the universe, you are well aware, that saw true adorers in its precincts—'tis the first city that ever held Christians in its hallowed walls. Submissive to the voice of the Apostles, their spirit was bequeathed to the docile city, which cherished their imperishable ordinances. She learned from those sacred lips how to hold the high and solemn festivals of Christianity, as well as to observe every other practice of our creed. The circumjacent cities conformed themselves speedily to the sacred model which Antioch presented, and as Aleppo (which was called *Hierapolis* in ancient times, and *Berea* subsequently) was the most adjacent. Of all the towns in Asia, 'twas the most exact in conforming to the customs

and traditions which distinguished Antioch. It has even an advantage over every other ;—religion has been uninterruptedly observed in Antioch, since St. Peter introduced it, to the present hour ; in consequence of which its traditions are more certain, its practices more respectable. Let that be as it may, certain it is that their fasts are exceedingly austere, and that their lenten observances are wonderfully rigorous.

The custom of the Maronites is that of Catholicity ; while Armenians, Greeks and Surians abstain from every species of sustenance till 3 in the afternoon, and even then the following articles of food—butter, fish, milk, cheese, and oil, are carefully excluded from their lenten repasts. The Armenians are more austere ; together with refraining from these viands, the Armenians abstain from wine, and never dream of dispensations. Old men of 80 and children of ten fast as rigorously as persons in the prime of life. Matrons enceinte, women giving suck, conceive themselves subjected to the same discipline, yet you never see an accident follow this austerity. They are perfectly persuaded, that from this obligation no human casualty can possibly exempt them. Persons on the point of death, who, in order to sustain expiring nature, are coerced by necessity to take a little food, are careful to exclude the prohibited descriptions. If an egg has been eaten by a schismatic when sick, he trembles to confess it, as he deems it a transgression too deep to be forgiven. Should a doctor, in the beginning of Lent, to preserve his patient's health, prohibit fasting and prescribe flesh meat, he would not make a fortune ; they would regard him as not only a prevaricator, but as a monster, and as a minister of Satan ; they would fly

from their Physician with the utmost horror. Such is the rigour of the orientalists, as well in opinion as in practice.

You will enquire of me now how the Protestants behave. As in Holland and in England, the Protestants in Asia observe neither abstinence nor fast; but every one is scandalized at such a line of conduct. The natives of the country cannot be persuaded that the Protestants belong to the brotherhood of Christians; they cannot conceive that they come within the pale of Christianity, and even the Mussulmans consider them as destitute and nude of all religion. They are sometimes sensible of these reproaches, and being unable to sustain them, in lenten times consume their meat in secret. Some of them confess that they are perfectly surprised to see that all the religions of the East nearly agree in nothing with that which they profess. We derive a decided advantage from this difference. You wish us to ascend, we sometimes say to them, to the earliest epochs of the naissant faith in order to justify traditions—the period you appeal to is the first four centuries. Ask of any or of all of these people who environ you, and will they not tell you that in their observances, which are likewise those of Roman Catholics, they invariably follow apostolical traditions; traditions which the celebrated Antioch bestowed on them whom they consider as their mother. Our Protestants are considerably embarrassed by these arguments; they dare not say that lent, confession, fast, and abstinence, purgatory and the real presence, are merely the invention of the Roman See and which have issued from the forge of Satan. With their eyes, with their own eyes, do they see the very contrary. The question is not here



about Babylon or Anti-Christ ; these, indeed, are words of thundering sound, which, enunciated with that insane hardihood which heresy inspires, are irrefutable arguments in England, but are so utterly inane and null as to signify something less than nothing here. They must attack a thousand Christian nations—they must repudiate antiquity, say anathema to Antioch, and relinquish the apostles. The step is very difficult to take. Those gentlemen, accordingly, are careful to avoid the agitation of a question which they find is indefensible, and more experienced than in Christendom, on controverted points and on Catholic observances, they maintain a serious silence, being well convinced that the Greek church would not give them her suffrage. This conformity in opinion of the Greek and Latin churches sometimes makes a salutary impression upon persons whose lives are in the right. Some years since, I was very intimate with a minister of Holland. He was a man of much intelligence, and, as he spoke Latin with facility, I frequently conversed with him. He had paid for a birth on board a vessel in the harbour when he told me in confidence, before his embarkation, that, in order to consider an affair of much importance he should visit Italy, as his personal experience had elicited reflections by which the complexion of his opinions had been altered.

Persons of the faith pretendedly reformed would hardly undertake to dogmatise in this place ; they would not, at least, do so with impunity. Some time since, a clergyman of the church of England, whose zeal for his opinions was perfectly quixotical, got a catechism printed at considerable cost ; he hoped to innocate the spirits of the Christians of the country with the virus with which



he was himself infected ; but it was trodden under foot ; it was torn into pieces, and its separated fragments committed to the flames, before the missionaries had time to pay attention to the circumstance. The Christians of all “these countries of the sun” never dream of doubting the real presence in the eucharist ; and they are so devoted to their lenten rules, they’d rather die than break them ; and from their parent in the faith, from their neighbour Antioch, they have learned the practice of praying for the dead. To invoke the saints, St. George especially is so dear a privilege, that the easterns would die a thousand deaths rather than relinquish it. Nothing can be added to the solemn veneration with which the very Turks consider Mary ; they term her the mother of the great prophet Jesus, and they revere the Virgin in the quality of mother so profoundly, that in horror they impale the Jews alive who venture to blaspheme her. How contradictory is human nature !—what strange discrepancies mankind exhibit ! Men who are born in the bosom of the faith deny the blessed Lady that respect which even the most implacable antagonists of the name of Christianity concede her.

The grave respect of the unsmiling Mussulman is by no means limited to Mary. The tomb of the Messiah is one of the termini of his “pilgrim feet.” When traversing the seas or deserts that encircle Palestine, the Mahomedan pilgrim looks often and often, with an eye of veneration, over the waste, for the sepulchre of Jesus, and having returned from that toilsome wayfaring, his turbaned brethren, when in the evening sunset they sit round him with their long chibouks, listen to his recital with attention, and regard him as a person of exalted

piety ; or, if he happen to pass by them, they exclaim as they point after him, "he is a saint ; he has been at Mecca and Jerusalem." They attach distinction to this double pilgrimage. A merchant of ours who lived a long time in the holy city, and saw these Turkish pilgrims repeatedly, informed me that they trail upon their knees from the portal of the sepulchre ; that they remove from the turban its cesse previously to entering (which is always ignominious when done by force, but a token of respect, if spontaneously performed) ; that finally they incline themselves profoundly, and, prostrate on the earth, touch the flooring with their forehead. "This spectacle," he added, "has always edified me, and even moved me in some instances to tears." Among the many magnificent and pompous titles which the Grand Signior assumes in mandates emanating from the throne, appears that of preserver and protector of the city of Jerusalem. 'Tis a secret solace to the captive Christians to see their haughty masters doing so much honour to the God whom they adore. They implicitly believe in all the articles of Christian faith, while to many Europeans its a miserable pleasure to torment themselves and others with affected doubts. I fear I have slightly deviated from my subject-matter, Rev. Father, but you will be so good as to attribute this digression to my zeal. I return to the manner in which Easter is observed by our Asiatic Christians.

Easter Sunday is entitled the day of the great festival, or simply the feast. Surians, Armenians, Maronites, and Greeks, Catholics, Heretics and Schismatics alike have the same observances in paschal times. Exactly as in Europe, we have three successive festivals, and, as in

Europe, the solemnity commences on holy Saturday. They observe no fast upon the easter eve, as they never fast on Saturday. When the sun has gone down, moreover, the Armenians eat flesh meat on holy Saturday. An Armenian had been shrived by our superior, and when he had renounced his schism, he promised to conform to the custom of the Catholics, and eat no meat till Easter Sunday ; but, added the Armenian, I can promise nothing more ; for I fear my authority is not sufficient to prevail upon my wife to be equally abstemious.

When they meet one another on the day of the great festival, one tells the other to rejoice, “as Jesus the Messiah has arisen.” “Yes,” says that other, “He is truly risen.” They decorate their houses on this happy day, and put on their most magnificent apparel ; and there is no one in the city but wears something new ;—they leave the church at 10 o’clock, and continue to pay visits until evening. Kindness, cordiality and decency pervade these meetings. Every heart is lighted up by an innocent and guileless joy, and you easily perceive ’tis religion that inspires it.

On Holy Saturday, the friars and the French visit us and wish us a good Easter ; we receive the same honour from the English and the Hollanders. Do not be surprised at these reciprocal civilities. Whether English, French, Italians, or Dutch, we consider one another as compatriots here with reference to the people who environ us, who in turn designate all Europeans by one common appellation, that of Franks.

The visits we received we returned upon Monday ; we passed by the Iudaide, or the quarter of the Christians. All the streets in this section of the city were

traversed by a multitude of people, natives of all lands, and even by Turks, with baskets full of flowers, which the bearers vended to those who wished to buy those fragrant wares. Toys were exhibited in all directions. People rivalled one another in exclaiming, when they met, "Rejoice, for Jesus the Messiah is arisen." For three successive days, nothing can be heard but these expressions, suggested by religion to her followers; and it would seem as if all languages were consecrated to announce the resurrection.

Our first visit was to the archbishop of the Maronites. A rector received us at the door, by whom we were led to the parlour of the prelate; it was the room of state, the finest apartment in his lordship's house. Will you credit it, my Rev. Father, this room of state was little larger than a Jesuit's cell, and this, you must admit, is saying little. This clashes with your French ideas, and at first, I must confess, I was surprised myself. Here we were standing in the presence of the prelate, on a piece of carpeting of great antiquity, on which his grace was sitting with his legs across, with his back against a cushion, which, as well as I could judge, was as aged as the carpet. His vicar sat beside him, and some rectors beside him, in the oriental mode. His lordship rose upon our entrance, and when we took his hand to kiss it, he withdrew it. 'Tis the custom of the country for the clergymen to kiss the prelate's hands, while the laics, when they meet them in the streets in the presence of the Mussulmans, confer the same honor on the priests.

We next paid a visit to the Grecian patriarch, who sat in a saloon as extensive and magnificent as one of our European churches. Do not be scandalised at such an

alteration from the Maronite's simplicity. This sumptuous apartment was not erected by the pride, but by the piety, of the Greek. The pious prelate has his purposes. His design in building this superb apartment is to make a church of it as soon as may be ;—this is a device which the Christians have recourse to. As the Alcoran prohibits them to build new churches, to escape a direct violation of the law they build saloons, which they live in for some years. They subsequently ask permission of the Porte to change them into churches, and they easily obtain it if a certain sum of money be transmitted to the Grand Vizier.

Thus the prelate must not only be forgiven, but applauded. He has conformed to the Catholic opinions. The schismatical ascendancy in the city of Damascus, where he then resided, who, after his conversion, did not wish to be of his communion, proceeded to elect another patriarch ; this division has obliged him to settle in Aleppo. He is, physically and morally, as fine a man as you could wish to see ; his manners are polished, prepossessing, and engaging. He made us sit beside him on the same carpet with his grace. I will not tell you that with both the prelates they presented us with coffee. Asiatics would deem themselves dishonoured if they omitted to present it, and despised if the coffee were refused. After offering our devoirs to the princes of the church, we visited the principal inhabitants, whether Surians, Greeks, Armenians, or Maronites. We were received in every instance in an ornamented room, where a table is perpetually spread for three successive days to feast the visitors. The viands were the same in every residence—hard eggs, dates, figs, grapes, pestachios, and



confectionary of various kinds. You make your choice among these different meats, and, when he has eaten, a cup of wine and water is offered to the visitor. You may eat and drink as little as you like, but at every visit you must eat and drink. Were it not for that, these visits would be insupportable; but, in consequence, they are followed by no inconveniency.

What I have written will suffice to shew the discrepancy between the Ramadan and the Lent—between Christian solemnities and Ottoman observances. Merely to judge by this superficial seeming, the Christian religion must triumph over Islamism in the judgment of all their unprejudiced observers. Piety, innocence, and decency, are all upon the side of Christianity. I write these details without fearing to fatigue you—in France they are so avid of the merest trifles introduced to them from alien nations! Can manners, creeds and customs prove less irritating to their curiosity.

In all their missions, our Fathers of Aleppo have the same success. One half of the Surians have already been converted. We have reason to expect that the Surians of Aleppo will be all re-united to the Church of Rome in a very little time. The Armenians and the Greeks are awaking to their errors, and are relinquishing them every day. Do not despise these conquests, Rev. Sir; the reason they are sometimes rare is, that they are very difficult, and if it happen that any one be tempted to despise them, induce him to remember the opinion of a holy doctor, that you may enlighten millions of idolaters with more facility, and touch a thousand sinners



with more ease, than persuade a heretic, and that a schismatic's conversion is a species of miracle. And yet we daily see this miracle performed.

We have the solace of beholding daily, converts whose fidelity is firm as the mountains. Not long ago, a Surian, who had recently renounced his schism, was questioned by a prelate of the schism concerning his opinions. "Tell me," said the prelate, "aren't you a Frank," as the term has a very universal meaning, embracing all the natives of the Christian countries, as well as the professors of the Catholic religion. The convert considered himself as warranted in saying that he was not a Frank. "But," pursued the prelate, "have you not embraced the religion of the Franks." "The religion of the Franks," the Surian repeated; "of what Franks pray?" You should know, to understand the Christian's answer, that the Surians detest the religion of the English, who are not good Franks, they say. To bring his tergiversation to an end, the prelate cried, "Do you not follow the opinions of the Pope and the Church of Rome?" The question was unsusceptible of ambiguity—dissimulation would be treason to his faith. "Oh, yes," replied the Surian; "I glory in the circumstance." "Know you what you are saying, infidel?" exclaimed the schismatic. "Know I what I am saying? know you, my lord, that already almost all the Surian people participate in my opinions, and that we shall be all reunited to the church of Rome before the world's much older. You have more knowledge than the laity, my lord; ye are our fathers and our masters in the faith; why do you not lead us to the truth yourselves? Is it not a shame that

we are obliged to go before you, Signior?" Exasperated by these just reproaches, the prelate repressed the explosion of his anger, and replied, *In peccatis natus es totus, &c.*, and returned him the six piastres which the bishop had received by way of tithes. The convert, who had no expectation of this present, received it willingly, it was so much saved upon the Surian's side, and so much lost upon the prelate's, who revenged himself a few days afterwards in a very impotent and foolish way. In passing by the Surian's dwelling, he cursed the house, and interdicted its inhabitant. But, then, was this excommunication valid? You may easily conceive how little the new Catholic was troubled by the censure. All that I know is, that he failed to bring him back the six piastres in order to the removal of the interdiction. This was a measure which you would not have advised.

I promised you, my Rev. Father, to finish this epistle with some of the circumstances of my journey. I am sure that some of the scenes will amuse you much, though they gave me little pleasure at the time I was enacting them. On leaving Tripoli, I was confided to the care of a chief of Muletiers, denominated Soliman. I remember, that while I was making up my little baggage on the day of my departure, Soliman was breakfasting. Soliman was no way scrupulous—my guide was totally untroubled by those qualms of conscience which so often disturb Mussulmans when drinking wine, and as no Mahomedan was near who might interrupt his pleasure, my guide indulged in deep potations. This elevation over local prejudices prepossessed me in his favour. We were hardly in the plain, with its wide expanse before us, when he made me mount my mule, which had neither

girth nor stirrups, and was only intended for a sumpter mule. Pricking up his Rosinante, Soliman set out with great rapidity; mine had too much spirit to be left behind, but pranced forward with expanded nostrils, in the vain hope, as it seemed to me, of vying with his comrade. The moment that my mule began to move, I was removed from my seat, and pitched upon the ground; my baggage descended instantaneously, falling on my person with a heavy jog. Though I was left alone, luckily I was not wounded. Having risen from the earth, as my guide was out of sight, I called aloud for help. A Turk descended from a neighbouring hill, and spontaneously assisted me in replacing my baggage on my mule, and having kindly enquired if I suffered any pain, good naturedly assisted me to mount my mule. I now proceeded on my journey at a very gentle pace, for I assure you that my unexpected fall had greatly edified me. At noon, I arrived at a ruined castle, where the caravan was destined to assemble. As soon as I descended from my mule, I sat me down upon a river's bank at 50 paces from the ruined castle, and opening my srip upon the sward, with the limpid water running at my feet, prepared to dine. Two hard eggs and a little cheese, formed the materials of my meal, but I reckoned upon eating it alone, and at least tranquillity I hoped would be present at my humble repast, when I saw myself approached by two tall Arabs, who demanded their share! I cannot positively tell from whence they came, but I pleaded eloquently for my viands. For twelve days' march, my scanty store was twelve hard eggs, some nuts, some biscuits, and the half of a cheese. They were deaf to all my arguments, and the mouths of the barrels of

their muskets were levelled at my person. It was better to fast a little in addition, I thought, than to be killed; accordingly, I shared with the Arabs a little of my food, and the Arabs were satisfied with a little.

Having provided for my board so well, my lodging was the next great object. I selected a projection from the wall, a sort of shelf or ledge, something like the the surbase of a chamber, upon which I laid my paillasse. This was in reality a mat (rather than a paillasse), such as they place upon a mule's back, lest his burden gall him. Though it was any thing but good, the place excited envy. A Turk deposited his arms upon this ledge who told me he should keep it, "because," he continued, and the argument was irresistible, "its the most commodious I can find." The sole accommodation which the place possessed, as far as I could see was, that you could see the moon and stars and blue expanse of ocean from this ledge; I relinquished it reluctantly, and while I disputed the possession, the sound of my voice attracted Soliman my guide. Nothing could surpass the civility of Soliman to me, when turning fiercely on my Turk, and assuming a magisterial tone, he told him that he knew me, and that I should in his despite repose upon the ledge, because (and this is an additional specimen of Turkish logic,) I was a doctor of my law and a doctor of the Franks. The title was a thunder-stroke to my adversary, who stultified at so much dignity, retired from the ground without making a reply. You see that this honorable appellation, on which certain individuals set so little value, is not always useless.

We had another scene the succeeding evening as violent as this. We were encamped upon a meadow

which was separated from a Turkish Cemetery only by an intervening road, I expected in the Cemetery to find a proper place to spread my paillasse. I assumed my capote at the entry of night, which is a kind of surtout which travellers on land or sea make use of, as at present they make use of a riding coat in England ; it differs in nothing from the habit of a Capuchin, except in being lined with thick drab cloth, and being open in the front. Taking my capote I proceeded to repose upon a sepulchre which had been placed above a Turk a few days previously. The stone which closed the tomb seemed to me to be disposed designedly to suit my purposes, it seemed admirably adapted for a bed, it was smooth and horizontal, and I was perfectly delighted with my lodgings, but unfortunately my delicacy cost me dear. I was scarce a quarter of an hour wrapt in a deep and tranquil sleep, when I was awaked by the cries of several Turks, who encircling my tomb commenced vociferating that I was profaning the sepulchre and the cemetery, for a Christian to repose on a Moslem's tomb, to whom heaven had been opened by the great Mahomet, was an exceedingly bad augury for them, they asseverated simultaneously. My charitable Soliman was not devout, he looked upon this zeal as superstition, but knowing that we were not the strongest party, my personal security excited his alarm. He extricated me from this dilemma with as much decency and on my part, with as little loss of dignity as could be hoped for. Imagine his bales of merchandises packed on one side, and his mules parallel upon the other, on the intervening space he spread a horse cloth ; now as I found, that for me there was no tranquillity, even at the grave ; as I was



obliged to relinquish my sepulchre, I sought repose upon his horse cloth. Here I slept quiescently ; the mules, who often dipped their nostrils to ascertain my nature and sometimes touched me with their heels, failing to do me any injury. These mules are the mildest creatures in the world, and among the Franks it is a common proverb, that in the Levant the beasts are as mild as human creatures, and the men have the cruelty of beasts.

In the middle of an obscure night, we set out upon a narrow road which was full of ruts, and edged with precipices, for we could not defer our departure till the dawn. We individually studied the person who preceded us with great sedulity, as we could only follow in an Indian file, that is, one by one. Luckily for me I was preceded by a Turk, whom I perceived with facility before me, for the cesse of his turban being white, by which the Turks are distinguished from the Christians ; the cesse was discernible even in the dark. Like that of the priests of the Greeks and Maronites, mine was blue : to those who are not priests, it is permissible to wear red or violet, those of the Jews being striped. The descendants of Mahomet are privileged to wear a green silk Turban, and the race of Mahomet only.

An ambassador complained to the king of Persia, on the part of the Grand Signior, that green was worn by his commonest domestics, for which as the colour of the great Mahomet they should have respect. The Schah replied, laughing at their superstition, that this " sacred colour was the commonest of all, that bulls and asses trod upon the green, and that blue, as the colour of the skies, should be esteemed more highly." The ambassador



was disconcerted, he ceased to insist upon this article of his instructions.

Worn by the way and exhausted by the sun, I saw some trees in a distant valley; I bent my footsteps thither, but on approaching, I saw that some distinguished Turks had raised pavillions in this grateful shade. I retired instantaneously, and leaned against some bales of goods, on which the sun's reverberations were intolerable, although it was November. A Turk of my brigade offered me a cup of coffee without sugar, it was far from being a pleasing beverage to me, but, acquainted with the customs of the country, I took it unhesitatingly, and as I was bathed in perspiration, I strove to gulp the coffee; not to be outdone, in generosity I made him a present in my turn, consisting of six nuts. I specify the number, as the number of my nuts at the time was a matter of consideration; I fancy I found some favour in his eyes, and every day during the continuance of our journey we reciprocally made these mutual presents.

We encamped beside a river the succeeding day; we sat upon the sward with the cool lymph running at our feet, where the dense and interwoven foliage afforded a delicious shade. My situation as to scenery was perfectly delightful; but, unfortunately, I had nothing to eat: my provisions were so very much diminished, that I looked forward to the utter absence of a supper. Soliman, my incomparable Soliman, the solitary confidant of all my needs, and all my indigence, brought me two little birds that had been broiled upon the coals. Soliman had got them from the fowlers of the caravan; to me they were manna in the wilderness. We divided them between us, one of them I took, and left Soliman the other, who

added to the feast a bowl of rice, which was so very solid that you could hardly penetrate it with a spoon; and unhappily we had but one of these necessary articles. We made use of this solitary spoon alternately, taking turn about with admirable order; I swallowed my rice and repugnancy together; I was a veteran in oriental habitudes. He began to eat the first: "eat away, that is good, dont be afraid," says Soliman to me, gulping his rice and giving me the spoon; so we sat round the basin and toiled with assiduous industry. We drank from the same vessel placing the same pitcher to our lips, we quaffed as much water as we wished, without the slightest cost or scandal; I say the same pitcher, because this would be a heinous violation of decorum in France, but it would be disgraceful to do otherwise in the Levant, as they always affect equality in Asia. I saw Moorish slaves, in the course of my journey, eating with their master, at their owner's table, selecting such viands as they happened to prefer. This is utterly opposed to French politeness, but in the Mussulman's opinion, it conforms to the laws of humanity and nature. They reason thus; we are all men, the Mahometans aver, consequently in our origin we are all equal: a man should never entertain the slightest repugnancy for another man. Probably we might reply that this harmonizes with the laws of nature, but not with nature, civilised and perfected by education; such reasoning, however, is lost upon the Turks; they laugh at our onerous and irksome politeness.

We next arrived at the gates of a city, which we did not enter. The inhabitants immediately came out in crowds, some from curiosity to see new faces, and some

from love to find acquaintances ; Turks endeavoured to discover Turks, Greeks sought Greeks, Catholics were busy in ascertaining Catholic. As amid this multitude nobody sought for me, I was a tranquil spectator of the scene, unable to play any but the part of a mute. I had no dinner at my command, and a few biscuits in the bottom of my sack were all that remained of my travelling provision. To rest myself was my only aim, except to view, as I sat, the situation of the place, when I was approached by certain persons, who, saluting me, respectfully kissed my hand.

The persons who saluted me were Christian Maronites, who perceived from my dress, as I suspected, that I was a priest. Perceiving that their deputies were well received, a multitude of Maronites assembled round me, who did me, in the presence of the Turks, the same honour as their deputies. The rector himself repaired to visit me, but as he was my brother in the priesthood, the rector did not kiss my hand. Beseeching me to follow him, he led me to his house, where a dinner was served up, consisting simply of battered eggs, but to me this meal was luxury. He led me to his church as soon as dinner was concluded : this church became crowded with Maronites the moment that I entered it, who were anxious to contemplate a European priest. I sung the complins and vespers of all saints' day aloud for them, as well as the matins and the Lands of the ensuing day. As they joined me in the chant, I from pure civility could not cease to sing while they continued, nor would they give over for a single moment while they saw me, with open throat, continue to entone the melody ; having never

heard it previously for them the chant of the church of Rome had all the charms of novelty.

Your zeal for the honour of our Saviour's house, I am certain, would excite your Reverence to tears were I to describe this miserable church. Shall I say it was a stable, but the pile, alas, was less respectable, sir, it was something more indecent. The edifice consisted of a little square, four miserable rafters stretched across the four bleak walls that formed it, briars were bound up in bundles, and were lying in faggots on these naked rafters. The roof had been made into a terrace on the outside, on which persons promenaded, the walk was on a level with a neighbouring field. The rector shewed me all his ornaments, which consisted of a poor chasuble, the towel and the alb were quite discoloured, and had been at least six months in service. The altar was without an antependium, the naked stone was destitute of covering. "He should ornament the altar for the coming festival," he said; he proceeded to his treasury with this design, and four pictures which he fastened to the wall with pins, the present of a passing missionary,\* (you might buy them in France for an English penny) were first exhibited. He regarded me with triumph in his eyes when his gallery was hung; I endeavoured to express my satisfaction at the rector's taste. Had I been able to unpack my goods and separate them from incumbent things, I should willingly have given him what he wanted. Although the sacrament was in its shrine, no cresset burned in the sanctuary. Doubtless, you expect a

\* The meanest prints upon religious subjects, are highly esteemed by the Christians of the East, while a pen-knife is a princely present to a Turk.

description of the tabernacle, but alas, the temple had no tabernacle; a box of a reddish colour enclosed the blessed eucharist, it was lying on a level with the chandelier, and this ciborium of wood was a missionary's gift. I presented the rector with a better box; which he secreted in his treasury. How touching is a scene like this, to a truly Christian heart.

Having rejoined the division of the caravan, to which I appertained, two fowls, I found, and a gourd of wine, had been sent me by the grateful priest. With this supply, I considered myself rich, I flattered myself with the reflexion that I now could gratify my generosity, and to-morrow might remunerate my Achates Soliman. I had eaten my attendant's birds; that he should share my fowls, was only equity. Before dinner time I put a little wine into my cup, and in order to add some water to my wine, I took the pitcher of that Turkish traveller who so frequently had given me a cup of coffee; he permitted me to act, but as soon as I had done he went to wash his pitcher at the fountain. Because a little of its water had been poured into my wine, this Turk, who was very different from Soliman, considered it unclean. As the slightest suspicion of his motive never dawned upon my mind, as soon as he returned I resumed the pitcher, as my draught was not sufficiently diluted; rising from his seat a second time, the Turk poured the water on the earth, and again proceeded to the fountain. The mystic motive of the Mussulman eventually struck my mind; you may imagine with what fervidness I formed the resolve to spare him such species of trouble for the future. When Soliman arrived, I related my adventure, beseeching him to bring me to some place apart where



he and I might dine together. He led me to a little thicket where he emptied the wine cup handsomely, because, sitting in the foliage as he was, the surrounding shrubs concealed him ; this, besides, was the Druses' country, whom the Mahometans regard as heretics.

Dinner being done, my religious Turk overwhelmed me anew with trouble. Happening to feel athirst in the refreshing evening hour, I repaired to that chrystal fountain, of which I have spoke before ; with his pitcher in his hand, the Moslem met me at the water's edge. The succeeding moment the scene was as follows. He was standing perfectly erect, while I was stooping, cup in hand, to fill my pitcher with the lymph. The scene was perfectly serene, fountain, skies and trees, 'twas all tranquillity, serenity, and peace ; when he suddenly exclaimed with all his energy, *ia allha, ia allha*, O God ! O God ! Stultified with so much clamour, I regarded him with open mouth ; but it was not long before I inferred from the Turks' embarrassment, gesticulations, cries, complaints, that I had committed some enormous fault. As I happened to be thirsty, I permitted him to cry, and stooping to the well once more, I quenched my drought. While I was engaged in drinking and the Turk was still exclaiming, many other Turks arrived. " Beware, beware," my Mussulman exclaimed, with a holy horror in his countenance, " beware of drinking this polluted water, this infidel hath dipped his wine cup in the wave, the fountain is defiled ! !"

The reply they made was to ask him jeeringly, " upon your soul," (*a la nafra*.) I asserted stoutly that the fount was not defiled, *naam a la nafsi*, &c. and all the wits of the world will agree with me ; for though wine may be frequently defiled with water, that water



could ever be defiled by wine, shocks all common sense. The Mussulman spectators who stood around the fountain, gave credit to my pleadings preferably to his, and assuredly the Moslems were right, though certain it is, that conformably with their ideas, the fountain is unclean, and how its lost purity shall be restored to it, I cannot imagine. We descended by a sloping road into a valley, where a multitude of cottages were scattered through the fields. If you be a stranger in a foreign land, every thing you see will excite your admiration. The persons who crowded to these cottage doors, who stood beneath their eaves looking on us as we passed, awakened my surprise by their singular habiliment. They had their garments plentifully garnished with mother of pearl, and with shells, with precious stones, and the golden sequins of Venice, the females having pendants not only in their ears, but what is much more singular, drooping from their noses. The expression which this ornament confers upon the countenance, strikes an European as entirely new, but 'tis quite in keeping. From both their nostrils pearls were dependant, and such was the amount of these jewels of the nose, that in some, how the noses could sustain them, was a matter of astonishment.

We approached the abode of a horde of Arabs. We put ourselves in battle array, and passed the Arabs proudly. These brigands are afraid of fire arms, but entertain more terror for a Frenchman without arms, than for a Turk with weapons in his hands, of whom one Arab is considered as a match for five, and five Arabs for a single Frenchman, which will enable you to judge how far the terror of the name of France diffuses itself.

We finally arrived at Cafetin, the father-land of Soliman. I found accommodations at the house of Soliman, who by way of company, brought home the Turk, whose piety had caused me so much trouble on the route. On the route I often ate my meal in company, but till now I never ate it in a family way. As every thing they offered me excited my disgust, I watched the customs of the curious people, among whom I was a stranger. To see with what rapidity the Turks consume their food, is quite surprising, they were little more than fifteen minutes at their present meal. They washed their hands in water as soon as they had done, and their slovenliness rendered this precaution necessary.

The friends of my landlord came to see me, out of curiosity rather than civility: when they had surveyed me to their satisfaction, the visitors retired, when I saw myself surrounded by the females of the family, who grouped themselves before me, for fear I should be lonesome. I was surprised at their appearance, as women never enter the society of men in Asiatic countries. They were told, perhaps, by Soliman, that I was a religious, and that to visit me together would be no disgrace: my discovery, that their veils were raised augmented my astonishment. However, I never looked the ladies in the face, for here 'twould be considered as the greatest rudeness, and if they had perceived it, they'd have lowered their veils. Such are the austere laws which are imposed upon these people by the rigour of their education. Their manners are different indeed from ours. I had never, in the course of my European mission, experienced such good nature as I met with from this family of unbelievers. As I did not understand them, though they spoke to me

perpetually, they would often have the patience to vary their expression, in such different ways, that eventually I discerned some glimpses of their meaning. The natives of France, with all their elegant politeness, are not so complaisant in all instances to foreigners. Anything that I said was understood by them, as I took care to utter nothing that I did not know. The incongruous collocation of my words, my expressions, and my accent, sometimes made them smile, but the manner of the smile was more pleasing than offensive, inspiring me with confidence rather than abashing me. They asked me did I know the Arabic. No, I replied ; my studies in the tongue have but recently begun. Do you know the Turkish ? No !

“ Permit me, sir, to ask what language do you know ? ”

Italian, and Latin, French, and Greek ; I am well acquainted, too, with all religions ; I have reason to declare that only one of them is true, viz. the one that I profess, a religion which, unhappily, you do not know, but since you show me so much kindness, I shall return a second time to see you when I know your tongue, to acquaint you with it, to give you information, to attempt to save you. My promises seemed to be received with gratitude. Judging from appearances, missionaries alone are wanted here. The Druses feel the utmost horror for polygamy, and though in order to avoid avanies, and the rude and cruel treatment of the Turks, they fail to receive the blessed sacraments, they repudiate none of them in speculation. Two impediments are thus removed, wont to give much trouble to the missionary. Feeling the affectionate respect of these good people, I was solicitous to show my sense of it ; some trifling presents were the

fittest mean, but I was very poor. I found at length some trifles in my sack, which I distributed : I had rosaries, indeed, of a reddish wood, but as the crosses of the rosaries could give offence, and some insult might be offered to the symbol of salvation, I did not dare to offer them. I took courage, notwithstanding, and gave one to a girl that was hanging at the breast. But what was my astonishment, when I saw the mother take the chaplet from the child, and after kissing it, place it on her forehead with profound respect. The rosary went round from hand to hand till every soul in the assembly kissed, considered and admired it. These are indeed a very Christian kind of infidels. I murmured half aloud as I regarded them. It would seem, as if missionaries were all that these people stood in need of. If they do not get instruction the fault is not ours, suffer me to say, that to you we must attribute it. Let us have assistance Rev. Sir.

Whilst the circle were engaged in considering the cross, a lilliputian neighbour, of the age of nine, glided over the unechoing floor into a neighbouring apartment, the better to peep out at my extraordinary person ; the stripling was the son of a Mahometan. Filled with a feverish desire to see the curiosity, he left his hiding place to peep between their arms. But the moment he beheld the cross, he ran madly to a corner to procure a stick. Opposition was offered. They turned that chap out, and then continued to admire the crucifix.

After they had given me a thousand thanks, my chamber-lamp was freighted full of oil ; for it is the custom of the country, to have a lighted lamp the live long night in every apartment, as well in summer nights as in those of winter. Left to the solitude of my apartment, I said

my prayers, and took a little slumber. The succeeding day I reached my journey's end.

I have kept my word, my Reverend Father,—but as there are readers of the *News* whom nothing can affect but mighty circumstances,—victories achieved, and cities taken, there are Christians, too, whom nothing will delight, but monarchies converted to the faith of Christ, but realms and empires conquered to the Lord. 'Tis true, this letter will not please their taste ; but the trifling details with which this letter is replenished, are not so valueless as they suppose, though their interest is less intense. They acquaint us with the character of foreign nations, as well as with observances of their religion,—with pains and perils which can never be removed from the missionary's way. Such have been the purposes of my epistle : I trust I have fulfilled them ;—thus I have the honour to remain, &c.

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## THE SUPERIOR GENERAL

TO

FATHER FLEURIAU.

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July, 1723.

We cannot be precipitate in telling you, that an order has been issued by the Grand Signior, and which a capigi has conveyed to the city of Aleppo, and to the other important towns in Syria, by which the Christians subject to the Grand Signior are forbid to embrace the Catholic religion, and communication with Armenians, Greeks and Syrians, under pretext of giving them instruction, is strictly forbidden to the missionary Latins. The same decree commands the Christian Greeks, Armenians, Syrians, subjects of the Grand Signior, in case they have quitted their ancient religion to become Roman Catholics, to abandon the religion they have recently received, and resume their original profession without loss of time. This command has been issued at the instigation and solicitation of the Schismatical Patriarchs of Constantinople, of Jerusalem, of Damascus, and of Antioch, who at the time in question were holding a synodical assembly in the city of Constantinople.



The true motive which animated them was the chagrin they experienced at seeing the daily diminution of their followers and the augmentation of the flock of Jesus Christ, enriched as it was by the spoils of their schism. The Patriarch of Jerusalem, the most zealous of the partizans of the schism, was himself a witness of the progress of the Roman Catholic religion, when passing by the way of Damascus and Aleppo, he was repairing to Constantinople ; he witnessed the fervour of these infant churches with feelings of so painful a nature, that they could not be dissimulated. He related all the circumstances that he had seen to the Synod. This assembly was very careful to conceal the motive, by which its animosity was roused. When taking measures to solicit the command that he required, the Synod had recourse to calumny. It urged an accusation, of all others the most capable of exasperating the feelings of the Grand Signior and of his Vizier against the Roman Catholics.

The Patriarchs assembled at the Synod represented to the Grand Vizier, that the missionary Franks, as they designated the missionary Catholics, were seducing their people everlastingly; who were the subjects of the Grand Signior, and that they made them change their creed, to embrace the profession of the Roman Catholics : and that they made themselves busy in giving them instructions, an office appertaining to the Patriarchs alone. Nothing more was required than this simple exposition, in order to procure the command that they requested, and in truth they obtained it with the utmost promptitude and ease.

In consequence of this mandate, the Turkish officers, who always profit by the avanies imposed upon the Catholics put, the Bishop of Aleppo into prison, as well

as the Bishop of Seide, together with many priests and many seculars who were Catholic inhabitants of the cities of Aleppo, of Damascus, of Seide, and of Tripoli, threatening exile to some and destruction to others, unless they resume the religion of their Patriarch.

Our Consul at Aleppo has communicated this commandment to us; it has obliged us to suspend our missions, as well as the ordinary functions of our missionaries which for more than a century we have always exercised in this country.

All France is well aware, that we have been sent hither by the order of our sovereigns as well as in their name, to preserve and maintain the Catholic Religion in this country. We have implicitly obeyed the orders which have been intimated to us on the part of the Porte, but we have recourse, at the same time to the piety of the King, the protector of the Catholic religion in this domain of infidelity. Our Kings, the predecessors of the present monarch on the throne of France, had always conceded in similar occasions their protection to our society

The present affair has a more favourable aspect, than many which occupied us in anterior times; as it is a matter of public notoriety, that the present command has been promulgated in consequence of misrepresentations.

The schismatical Patriarchs accuse the Latin missionaries of causing the Armenians, the Greeks and Syrians to change the religion which they formerly professed, though it is obvious to every one, that the subjects of the Grand Signior preserve precisely the same ritual, which they always held. Having the approbation of the Roman See and of the Œcumenical Councils, their ritual is excellent. If there be an alteration, it is utterly *internal*,

and consists in nothing more for the most part, except in relinquishing certain superstitions as well as some particular errors, which schism introduced amongst religionists and in professing certain Catholic truths, which had been hidden from them only by their ignorance.

As to the allegations relating to the functions of our missionaries, those functions are in perfect conformity with ancient capitulations between France and the Ottoman-Porte, without our having made the slightest innovation. And so very far removed are the functions of our ministry from rendering the subjects of the Grand Signior disobedient to his Majesty, that the Turkish magistrates have frequently confessed that his Catholic lieges are more submissive than the Schismatics to the prince and to the government. My Rev. Father, we must beseech your representing this affair to his Majesty, that on this occasion the first fruits of his royal protection may be conceded to ourselves, in order to impress upon the Turk, that the king will be quite as zealous a defender of the faith in the Levant, as the kings his predecessors, especially Louis the Fourteenth of glorious memory. During the reign of Louis the Fourteenth, the schismatics frequently surreptitiously obtained similar decrees, but his imperative commands dispatched instantaneously to our ambassadors to require the revocation of such orders, were always executed with the happiest success.

The Marquis de Chateauneuf, ambassador at the Ottoman court, obtained firmans for us before now, the friendliness of which to the Catholic religion infinitely exceeded the hostility of all those orders which the schismatics could at any time have purchased to the con-

trary ; religion and the missionaries owe the Marquis everlasting obligations for his interference. His successor, the Marquis de Feriol, in like manner succeeded in maintaining such privileges with all imaginable vigour. Sheltered by the Egis of their puissant influence, the missionaries enjoyed comparatively halcyon days, and exercised their ministry with the utmost freedom. We have the more reason to believe that this recent resolution can be easily revoked, as the Maronite sieur Abraham, who was honored by a cross of Knighthood by Louis the Fourteenth, in his journey to Paris, several years since, has had a sufficiency of influence to obtain the freedom, from the Grand Vizier, of the Roman Catholic prelates who had been incarcerated by the aga of Seide, and Osman, pacha of Damascus. We cannot for a moment doubt, my Rev. Father, but that your zeal for the work of God, the efficacy of which we have so frequently experienced, will urge you to supplicate the monarch to be so benevolent as to give his orders to the French ambassador, to request the revocation of the recent order in execution of our old capitulations. Their faithful execution will render our Catholics secure, will re-establish the missionaries in their former functions, and will maintain the Catholic faith in this place, which would be speedily and utterly annihilated in these realms of infidelity were it deprived of the protection of our kings and the service of our missionaries. We elevate our hands to heaven to obtain from God that speedy succour which our religion now requires and the preservation of our youthful king, our puissant protector.—I remain with respect, my Rev. Father, your very humble and obedient servant,

PIERRE FROMAGE, S. J.

The Count de Morville, the Minister and Secretary of state for Foreign affairs, has given the King an account of this last prohibition of the Grand Signior, and has been ordered by his Majesty to write on the subject to the Marquis of Bonnac, his majesty's ambassador to the Porte.

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## LETTER FROM A MISSIONER IN GREECE.

My Rev. Father,—We have the honor of sending you, in obedience to your orders, the narrative of our voyage from Marseilles to Smyrna. We have happily arrived in this city, and now having made our solemn acknowledgments to God for his continual protection on the seas, it is imperative upon us to make acknowledgments to you for the favour of being admitted amongst the workmen of the gospel, which, by your mediation, was obtained for us, and of participating in functions so conformable to our institute.

And now these two first duties being complied with, we commence our recital by ingenuously confessing that our nature suffers much in those separations from our country, from our nation, and from those who are dear to us.

But then, we feel all the force of our vocation on occasions such as this. The soul is penetrated by a secret consolation from our being in the place to which Heaven has invited us for the greater augmentation of the glory of our Lord, and to aid in the salvation of innumerable souls, who would utterly be lost if the Saviour of the



world were not sending them incessantly persons who point out to them the pathway to his kingdom.

For, to those nations amongst whom our lot is cast, the words should be applied in which St. Paul addressed the Romans—"How shall they believe him of whom they have not heard, and how shall they hear without a Preacher?" In this exercise of evangelical preaching it is, that our missionaries are continually occupied. Before I speak to you, Rev. Father, of our mission in Smyrna, the town in which we have debarked, I must give you some account of our departure from Marseilles, of our transit of the ocean, and of the places by which we passed.

Having bidden you good bye at Paris, we proceeded to Marseilles, the place where we subsequently embarked. We spent a considerable time in waiting the departure of a certain good ship, which was always on the point of setting sail, and yet never left the port. Tired with this long delay, and regretting the vessels that we lost, we embarked on board a merchant ship, the crew of which was only 15 men. The captain was a worthy person. He was willing to convey us gratuitously, and promised to land us very speedily at Smyrna. The day of our departure being one of the finest we ever experienced, we had reason to anticipate that our captain would keep his word, but the winds upon the sea being quite as inconstant as the most envied fortunes of the age we live in, we speedily experienced their fickleness. Our wind, at first so favourable, suddenly became so violent, that our sails and little vessel were violently agitated. We had the greatest difficulty in the world to keep our feet, or even to keep our seats. I will not describe the other inconveniencies which are commonly the consequences of



such a situation, especially to those unaccustomed to the sea. We brought with us a young Surgeon, who had been appointed to accompany us, whose services we expected would be useful to the missionaries ; for, by means of the medical profession, which is held in the highest estimation in the Levant, the protection of the Turkish officers is easily gained, and the mansions of the Christians are open to the word of God. This young man, who had never seen the sea, was so terrified by a violent gust of wind, that, conceiving himself lost, he came to me as pale as cream, and besought me with trembling accents to hear his confession instantaneously. I took advantage of his disposition, to induce him to perform a good work. A short time afterwards the wind subsided, and his fear subsided with precisely the same rapidity. However, violent this wind had been, we had no reason to complain of it, for its violence advanced us considerably towards our destination. On the third day after our departure, we doubled Saint Peter's isle, which lies at the very extremity of the Island of Sardinia. We contemplated this island as we passed it by with the utmost veneration, as a place to which so many holy Bishops had been banished, as well as so many other defenders of the faith, who gloriously terminated their lives in what might be considered as a long martyrdom. After having coasted the island of Sardinia, we conceived that our captain would put into Malta. But as he wanted no provisions, he took the resolution of leaving it to his right at 25 miles distance, but a sudden wind arose, whose fury occasioned much disorder on board our ship, and compelled the captain to make the island with an anxiety as great as that with which he had sought to avoid it. Our vessel

sailed into the harbour at an hour so early, that we had a sufficiency of time to reach the residence of the Jesuits. We were received there with the utmost friendship and cordiality. We saw Father De la Motte, the confessor of the French Knights, and another Father, appointed to teach the mathematics; the latter died at Marseilles in the service of the Pestiferous, since the period of our visit.

My companion, who was sick, was speedily restored by the kind attention of the priests, and by the care which was taken of him by the chevalier de Sarasse, who is perfectly acquainted with the science of medicine, and who honored us with his friendship. Our captain, who was compelled to remain much longer than he wished at Malta, allowed us a sufficiency of time to see every thing that merits a stranger's curiosity in this island.

Two of the Fathers obligingly proposed to play the part of Ciceroni. We took advantage of their kindly disposition. I shall have the honor of assuring you, my Rev. Father, that, like every other visitor, we were charmed with the beauty of the island, its advantageous situation, the construction of the city, which is built upon a rock, that is well nigh perpendicular, and defended by fortifications of such a nature as render it the very strongest place in Europe.

After having visited and viewed all that merited attention, whether in the islands or the towns, I must acknowledge that I saw nothing more worthy of applause and admiration than the wisdom of the reigning government—than the exact order which prevails throughout—than the noble and edifying conduct of the Cavaliers, united to their humble and elegant politeness to all manner of people, and especially to visitors. The people

endeavour to imitate this politeness of their masters as far as possible.

The grand master commands in the quality of king, with reference to the people, and as a superior as to the members of the order.

He has at his court continually many Cavaliers, of the most ancient and the most illustrious houses in all Christendom; for there is no distinguished family in Europe, which does not feel a pride in having its members in the order of Saint John.

The sea separates the town of Malta into three several divisions; these three portions are three towns and three peninsulas. They are fortified by the natural rocks by which they are surrounded, and art and nature have helped one another so happily and mutually, that a single feeble part has not been left in which an attack could be possibly attempted.

The principal city is the one in which the grand master resides; it is called La Valette. The isle in which the house of the inquisitor is situate, is called Le Bourg; the third is entitled the island of St. Michael. The port which contains the gallies of the order is the most considerable for size; it is defended by the castle of St. Elma upon one side, and by the castle of St. Angel on the other. These two fortresses, towering at the entrance, guard the gallies effectually. I have been conversing with persons who informed me, that the pieces of cannon they had counted on the ramparts—which are designed for the defence of the city and the port—are 1800 in number—a number which has been since augmented. On the land side the city has got two enceintes; its fortifications are cut and fashioned in the solid rock; the

mansions present the appearance of amphitheatres. Every dwelling has its platform, which is intended to prevent the ill effects of a bombardment; for in case of a siege, they should cover this platform, which constitutes the roof, with a mass of mould and dung, which would receive the bombs upon its surface, and deaden the effects of the tremendous missiles. The city is exceedingly well-built; its houses are commodious, and elegantly ornamented; but it would seem as if the island had combined all its magnificence when building a superb and stupendous hospital, where all manner of diseased persons, of whatsoever nation, condition, or religion they may be, are received, attended, supported, and supplied with all things which they may require, gratuitously.

Though the order be in its institution a military order, the Knights are not the less hospitallers on that account, and the order, in all times, has constantly and carefully conserved this cherished end of its establishment; for, whilst the Cavaliers are girt for ever for the combat, and are never without arms in their hands to fight the foemen of our faith, at the same time they are ready everlastingly to extend their charity to every object of compassion that comes near their hospital. And that all the Cavaliers may have it in their power to practise this most precious duty, every hotel or priory has a day marked out for it, which its members shall devote to the service of the sick. Monday belongs to the knights of Provence; the hotel of France has Tuesday; Wednesday belongs to the hotel of Auvergne; Thursday appertains to the hotel of Castile; the hotel of Arragon has Friday; Saturday belongs to the hotel of Italy; and that of Germany has Sunday. The sick are served in-

variably in valuable vessels of solid silver. Every morning the grand master, followed by the grand cross, pays a visit to the hospital (a duty which he sometimes complies with after dinner), in order to know personally whether the commanders do their duty by the sick; whether the patients are well taken care of, and want nothing that may be necessary in their situation. When any of the Knights are in the number of the ailing, they are attended by the grand master himself. I do not think that any thing in the universe can be seen more edifying, than the extreme order invariably observed in the hospital. The charity of the Cavaliers ascends sometimes to so sublime a height, that many amongst them may be seen performing such acts of virtue as are only to be compared to those which we admire in the very greatest saints.\* The Bishop of Malta, the Prior of the Church of St. John, and the Grand Inquisitor, have each their separate jurisdiction in the spiritual department. The Prior, or rector of the Cavaliers, has the principal authority, which extends to the power of conferring orders. He has other powers, which only appertain to Bishops in almost all other instances. He wears episcopal ornaments, approves of the confessors of the Cavaliers, and gives dimissorials to the clerks of the order.

The Bishop has his residence at Citta Vecchia. He has a very handsome church. Like their bishop, the canons wear a violet camail. The first church of the order is that of St. John, as well as the most richly orna-

\* A very good edition of the *History of the Knights*, those heroic disciples of religion and chivalry; translated from the French of Ver-tot, was published by Christie, James's-street, Dublin, to which, if indeed it be not out of print, I venture to direct the attention of my countrymen.—T. A. P.



mented. We saw two large silver figures, of the human height, the one a St. John, and the other a St. Luke; they stand one at either side of the grand altar. Between the choir and the nave there swings a silver lustre, which, they say, has cost 60,000 Maltese crowns. It is a gift from the commander, Fardello de Trapano. Every tongue has a particular chapel in the church; the French Knights one, the German Knights another, &c. The very finest and most highly polished marble incrusts the internal surface of these chapel walls.

We saw an extremely handsome chapel dedicated to the great apostle Paul, in the suburbs of Citta Vecchia. There is a cave beside this chapel, whither, according to tradition, the apostle retired for three months and three days, subsequently to his shipwreck.\* The Acts of the Apostles, which communicate the circumstances of the shipwreck, have informed us of another fact; Paul and his dripping companions, having lighted a great fire, were spreading out their saturated garments, from which the brine was wrung, to its comfortable influence, when a viper issuing from the faggots, sprang upon the hand of Paul, and adhered to it with such tenacity, that the shipwrecked witnesses believed that the puncture of the poisonous tooth of this venomous creature would cause the apostle's death. But their surprise was inexpressible, when they saw the saint had but to shake his hand, in order to get rid of it, and that the member remained as destitute of injury as it had been previously. This circumstance caused the apostle to be considered by the marvelling Maltese as a very extraordinary personage.

\* Chap. 21.



Malta has enjoyed a remarkable and almost singular privilege since this event. Vipers and venomous reptiles, which in almost every other country are poison-bearers, are innoxious in Malta,\* such malignant creatures are even said to lose their venom if introduced into this island from other countries.

It is by no means incredible, that this favor was granted to the isle of Malta, to recompense its inhabitants for the good reception given to St. Paul, the especial object of public devotion and veneration in this island.†

Fossils, which are designated serpents' tongues, and serpent's eyes,‡ are not only found in the cave of St. Paul, but throughout all the island. Travellers never fail to carry some away with them, it being the popular opinion that they are preservatives against the ill-effects of poison. What is still more surprising is, that however great the quantity removed, these fossil tongues and eyes are apparently by no means diminished in number by the perpetual abstractions. The very same thing is said of the floor of the apostle's cave, insomuch that the earth seems to reproduce them as rapidly as they are removed.

\* In the opinion of some commentators, the island at which, A.D. 66, St. Paul was shipwrecked, is Meleda, situated in the Adriatic, the Latin of which is the same as that of Malta, viz. Melita.

† We learn from the Acts of the Apostles, that there were venomous reptiles in the isle of Malta, in the first century of the Christian era. We learn from the geography of Maltebrun and Mentelle, vol. viii. p. 522, that there are none in it at present. That this latter circumstance is a consequence of the apostle's visit, is a fact which the missionary believes, and which, as he observes, is by no means incredible.

‡ These so called serpents' tongues are the fossil teeth of fishes, of the sea dog kind. The "serpents' eyes" are likewise fishes teeth, spares and centropomes. They are really inexhaustible, because the soil is almost entirely composed of them.—T. A. P.

To return to our account of Malta: it is seven leagues in length, three half in width, and twenty-one in circuit. The solid rock is so near the surface throughout almost all the island, that it is fertile only in legumes, but the quality of these is exquisite. Towering forests and extensive vineyards cannot be expected; but the orange, the olive, and the lemon-tree, are very common, and their fruits delicious. We saw almond-trees in flower in the month of January.

A country so very agreeable as Malta, well deserves the immense population it possesses. The Maltese speak the Arabic, slightly corrupted. The men are all clothed in the French fashion, but some wear a little collar in addition, and a large black mantle. Priests and monks are very numerous. The women and young girls never go out alone; they are always followed by a female slave or attendant when they are seen abroad. Their dress and demeanour is so very modest, that a stranger might mistake them for so many nuns. They are generally seen wrapt in a black serge or silk mantle, which covers them from head to foot.

To finish my account of Malta, I shall add, that its greatest glory and its principal ornament is the great number of illustrious knights, whose valour is only to be equalled by their birth, which it possesses. They have the honor of being the zealous defenders of our holy faith, ever ready at a moment's warning to traverse the seas, and peril their existence in defence of it.

In their history we read with the utmost admiration, the account which is given of their great exploits, and of the prodigious successes of their arms. But the principle subject of a eulogy which shall be worthy of them, will

be that at present as well as in anterior times in their home upon the rock of Malta, as well as every where else throughout the world, the knights have been known, invariably to practise the purest and sublimest virtues inculcated by Christianity.

Down to the present hour, the knights continue to confer infinite honor on the Catholic religion.\*

Malta is governed, at present by a Grand Master, who eminently merits that good eminence. The prudence capacity, and benevolence displayed in his rule, have gained him the love and veneration of all Christian nations, and swell his ranks incessantly by new accessions of knights.

During our abode at Malta, our vessel was perfectly refitted. Having been informed of the day of our departure by the captain. We bade a farewell to our fathers, making them a thousand acknowledgements for the kindnesses we had experienced at their hands. Though it was winter, the air was as mild as if it were summer. The wind was favourable, and as our vessel ploughed the rippling deep, the sun which shone without a cloud sheathed the surface of the ocean, with the splendour of its effulgence. A troop of dolphins, feeling the comfortable warmth of the atmosphere, gambled together at the prow of our ship. We saw them often in the air, as they bounded now and then joyously from the water, our vessel continuing on her way at the same rate. We

\* Prompted by a profligate cupidity, which insatiate of the world, and unglutted by the plunder of the sea, coveted the little realm of the Knights, England doomed herself to everlasting infamy by refusing to restore the last sanctuary of chivalry to its rightful possessors. The conquest of Algiers by the French, must speedily deprive her of the advantages expected from it. Meanwhile, the banner of St. John still flutters on the winds of Muscovy.—T. A. P.

enjoyed this spectacle a length of time : an alteration in the weather, however, changed the face of things, and made us lose this enjoyment. There arose a tremendous wind, which happily was in our rear, compelling our bark to cut the waves with such velocity, that we should have reached Smyrna in four days if the storm had continued so long. The following night we deviated from our course, and we were so far from reaching Smyrna, that we were obliged to drop anchor at the isle of Sapienza.

This island is at the extreme point of the Morea, at the southern side. It is only a league from Modon, the capital of the province of Betuedere, in the Morea. As this sea is infested frequently with pirates, none of our fellow-travellers dared to quit the vessel, to pay a visit to the town of Modon ; we were content to walk upon the shore in order to breathe the fresh air of the island. Curiosity should never lead a traveller to visit it, for nothing is to be seen in this island but a few Arabs herding goats ; we met neither houses, villages, nor towns. They have made excavations in the rocks, in which they reside, together with their flocks, like absolute savages.

One day, walking with one of my companions in this island ; we perceived two men approaching us with astonishing velocity, we could see them penetrating the thickets just like cannon balls, and ascending the rocks and passing over them with the celerity of goats ; we could see that their persons were as barbarous as their costume—they were gigantic Albanians, and were armed with immense sticks, crooked at the end, and shod with iron. Bounding into our presence, and heated with their race, they asked us in a ferocious tone, and in a jargon which

was worthy of their voices, who we were, and whither we were going. We answered in a tone which was infinitely sweeter than that in which they had addressed us (and which might have shewn the barbarians how gentlemen should speak) that we were Frenchmen, that we were destined for the isles of Greece, and that our bark was lying at anchor in the harbour. The Albanians, without saying a syllable by way of answer, broke off abruptly, and we saw them ascending a height, from the apex of which they endeavoured to descry our vessel.

We related our adventure to our fellow-travellers as soon as we returned. The next day one of them, who, as he assured us, dreaded nothing in the universe, and who in particular had no fear whatever, he averred, for "those sorts of gentlemen," had the curiosity to descend into the isle to reconnoitre them. He had hardly gone a musket shot, when our two Albanians, with two others in their company, as unprepossessing in personal appearance as themselves, threw themselves upon him, and collared him before he could offer any resistance; and then, as the whole four were about him, they tied him to a tree, with his hands behind his back. "It's you, then," they vociferated; "you're the fellow," they shouted, "that fired upon our flocks; it shall cost you your life," they continued, meanwhile one of them discovered an enormous knife, which he applied to the neck of the traveller, as a caution to quietness, while the others were diving into the innermost recesses of his pockets. They appropriated the contents, whatever they might be, and then stripping him of his clothing, left him nothing whatsoever but his shirt. Having gathered up their plunder, three of them set off with the spoils, and when they



were out of sight; the fourth who had remained to guard the prisoner, untied him and ran away in the direction taken by his companions. Our traveller, whose bravery was ball proof, attracted universal attention by the very remarkable alteration which his morning's promenade had produced in his attire. From the deck of the vessel every eye was fixed upon him as he approached the ship, arrayed in the single garment which the robbers left him. He was fortunate enough to find persons sufficiently charitable to give him those garments of which he stood in so much need. None of our fellow-travellers after this adventure, and during the four days that we waited for a favourable breeze, felt the slightest propensity to seek the recreation and amusement afforded by the wholesome exercise of walking in the island, which is so truly entitled *Sapienza*, an exercise which had anteriorly yielded them so much pleasure.

At six o'clock in the morning on the 20th of January, our vessel took the breeze. We surveyed the Morea which was only at four leagues distance from us, while the vessel coasted its illustrious shores.

We passed at a little distance of *Coron*—we doubled the cape of *Matapan*, and found ourselves between *Cerigo* and cape *St. Angel*, on the morning of the twenty-first, and a little after *Malmsey*, or *Malvasia*, became discernible, which is the best neighbourhood, despite its name, in all the Morea, it is said.

This city was anciently called *Epidaurus*; it stands upon a great rock at the foot of which the gulf of *Napoli d'Romani* commences. That eastern shore produces that incomparable *Malmsey* of which the very name is eulogy. We eventually emerged from the



Morea to enter amid the isles of Grecian Archipelago, leaving Candia to our right.

The weather had been hitherto as hot as summer, but a northern wind having suddenly arisen, we felt it bitter cold. We found it expedient to procure capotes or mantles in which to ensconce ourselves from its severity. The snow-covered heights of the Morea shed this frigidity upon us—the cold excepted, we derived advantage from the wind, as in consequence of it we were debarking the next day at the port of Paros, at a league from Naxos. Unhappily, however, it did not continue very long. Our captain thought it necessary to put in at Argentaria, a little island in the Archipelago, between Melo and Siphanto. We had hardly cast anchor in the port, which is a tolerably good one, when two Greeks of the isle, with a very graceful air, approached us; they came on the part of the Consul of France, they said, to present us with his compliments on our arrival, and to make us an offer of refreshments.

We received this politeness with all the acknowledgements it merited, and we thought it only set down in our duty to wait upon the Consul and offer our acknowledgements in return; we desired the two Greeks to conduct us to him which they immediately did. The Consul's residence is at three quarters of a league from the port—we found him in the company of the Consul of England; both of them are natives of the country, and their families are the most respectable in the island. They received us with the utmost politeness. When the first compliments were exchanged, a collation was served up. The Consul of France proposed to shew us the city—we were accompanied by both these gentlemen—it did

not require any extraordinary length of time to traverse it, for the whole city consists simply of an hundred and fifty houses, and eight or nine hundred persons constitute its population. The streets are so narrow that two men can with difficulty walk through them abreast. We found some French families who carry on a petty commerce in this place, which is not so much a town as a village. The French were speedily informed of our arrival—the haste with which they thronged to see us was only to be equalled by their joy. They were delighted at so good an opportunity of obtaining news of France, we satisfied all their interrogatories; the very oldest news, facts of no small antiquity, had all the charms of novelty for them. The priests and the principle Greeks of the city visited us subsequently, and testified the pleasure that they experienced in seeing us, by the kindest expressions. They asked with earnestness if we were come to establish a mission amongst them; we have not forgotten, they exclaimed, the mission which Father Xavier Portier and his coadjutor established several years ago amongst us; our children had been illiterate, and they rendered them well informed; many of ourselves were mutually enemies and they made peace and reconciled us; we had ceased to live like christians, and they induced us to confess our sins to them and to approach the Holy Sacrament, to which we had been strangers for so long an interval; in a word, they made us know our duties. Since that period we have all deviated from the paths of peace into which they had conducted us. Come, they continued, and induce us to return, come and restore us that spiritual joy which the presence of Father James Xavier Portier diffused amongst our citizens, and which through his

absence we have lost. These words which we saw issuing from their very heart strings moved us almost to tears. we replied that we were come from France with every disposition to be of service to them, but that not knowing the language yet sufficiently, we were about to learn it, that we might be intelligible to them. They were satisfied with our replies. The bad weather which had caused us to put into Argentaria kept us there for two days without the slightest possibility of our quitting it. Lest we should be useless, we gave instructions to the French inhabitants, and taught their children their catechism. The Greeks and French assisted at our masses—a good example was given by the officers of our vessel, and by the mariners and travellers who never omitted their attendance; we were consoled by these good works for the delay in our departure. We took advantage of the first fine weather to quit the harbour of Argentaria. In the evening of that day we cast anchor at Siphanto, anciently Siphnos, a larger and a richer isle than that of Argentaria. We departed early the next morning with a favourable wind, which brought us in the evening of this day to Miconi. This is one of the Cyclades in the Egean Sea; on arriving here we learned that a considerable number of Roman Catholics resided in the island—we procured a guide to conduct us to the rector, to request his permission to say mass. Although he was a Greek by nation, the rector observed the Latin ritual: he was supported by the Propaganda for the service of the Roman Catholics. Informed of our arrival, his parishioners crowded round us to salute us with their curate amongst them; we were received by them with the utmost cordiality and warmth of feeling. They spoke much of the

mission which Father Portier had instituted in their island several years ago : we sadly want a second, said they : if he knew our wants he would come speedily to our assistance, as he was full of zeal for our salvation. We pledged ourselves to obtain them the new mission they desired, and next morning we said mass for them. A great multitude was present, and the devotion with which they assisted at the sacrifice delighted us. As we neither knew the vulgar Greek, nor their corrupt Italian, we could afford them no instruction : we said a few words to them, however, by means of an interpreter. After remaining in this island four and twenty hours, we took our leave of the rector ; he was anxious to accompany us to our vessel at the head of his parishioners, conjuring us at the same time to return to the island with all speed, and we embarked in presence of them all, and with so favourable a wind that we made forty leagues in fourteen hours. We arrived at the isles of Spalmodori, February 16th, having passed within a cannon-shot of Scio. My two companions were as anxious as myself to see this island, excited, as they were, by all that we had learned of the fervid devotion of its Roman Catholic inhabitants. However, at this time, our desires could not possibly be gratified : we continued our course through the Archipelago, and emerging from its numerous isles, we steered for Anatolia, in Asia. I thought when quitting France, that we should find in the Levant an everlasting summer, only varied now and then by excessive heats. Experience convinced us of the contrary, for we suffered the sharpest and most penetrating cold in this day's sail, which compelled our officers to assume clothing of a warmer character. As we were at one day's sail

from Smyrna, we anticipated making the harbour, but the wind died away so completely that we could scarcely make sail at all. We had to encounter another difficulty—we discovered, at the dawn of day, five Turkish men of war which were proceeding from Constantinople to Scio. A Sultana having thirty guns separated from her four companions and approaching our ship, commanded us to come on board. As we were by no means the stronger party we deemed it advisable to yield obedience and without uttering as much as a single syllable in remonstrance, we complied with the command with the utmost alacrity.

The commander of the Sultana caused our captain to ascend his ship, but, exchange is no robbery, he sent three Turks on board our vessel in return, luckily they found nothing contraband on board, and when they had reported the condition of our vessel, the captain of the Turkish man of war overwhelmed our commander with interrogatories as to the state of Sicily and Malta and then restored him to us: upon his return our captain exhibited exemplary politeness by saluting the Turkish vessel with the discharge of a solitary gun, the Turks returned the salute and continued on their course. A contrary wind delayed us for some time in entering the gulf of Smyrna. At length an auspicious moment arrived, in which we were enabled to double the Cape of Borun, (situated at the extremity of the gulf of Smyrna;) we were charmed at the prospect which the gulf presented. The gulf is fifteen leagues in length and five in latitude—its coasts are crowned with olive trees. In perspective we saw a great number of vessels riding at anchor near the shores, while the magnifi-



cent vista formed by the ships and olive-covered shores was terminated by the town of Smyrna, lying at the bottom of the gulf. We arrived at noontide, February 23. Our voyage lasted seventy-five days, and was performed during a very severe winter—thank heaven we arrived in perfect health in Smyrna. The superior of our mission, father Adrian Verzeau, and the other French fathers, had long expected our arrival. Having learned that a vessel was entering the bay, they immediately imagined that we were on board—they came down to the port to see the debarkation. I cannot express to you how great was our mutual joy ; we embraced one another with the most heart-whole affection. They led us to their mansion and supplied us with all the refreshments of which we could possibly have any need. After a few days' repose, father Adrian Verzeau brought us to the house of the archbishop that we might offer him our respects as well as to the dwelling of Mr. De Fontenu, the French Consul—we were received with the utmost kindness and civility ; the succeeding days were passed in visits ; we received those of our disciples, and we returned their visits. The affection they evinced for us was an evidence of the sincere veneration which they entertain for our missionary Fathers ; the services rendered by the latter to the French, the Armenians, and the Greeks, have procured them the confidence and the esteem of those nations.

The protection which Mr. De Fontenu affords our functions, and the attentions of the French gentlemen who reside here, whom we cannot praise too highly, inspire the people with the sentiments which they entertain with reference to the missionaries. After we had



satisfied civility, we applied ourselves exclusively to the study of the languages, in order to participate in the everlasting labours of our missionaries. For it is by the fervour by which we are animated in the commencement that we are able to surmount the difficulties inseparable from this study, which is so much the more necessary, as we can only hope to make our ministry fruitful, by being familiar with the language of the inhabitants. We have the consolation of finding much more occupation in Smyrna than in France; none have failed to find such occupation, except such persons as have likewise failed in applying themselves opportunely to philological pursuits. The solitary town of Smyrna presents the missionaries an extensive field, in which there are many harvests to be made. This city had the honor, in former times, of being entitled the first of the Seven Churches of Asia. The general councils of the country were held here. It is even still one of the most celebrated cities in the Ottoman empire; commerce flourishes in Smyrna—the gulf is almost perpetually crowded with ships from France, England, Holland, Venice, and Genoa. They come hither to export Persian silk, the camlets of Angora, cotton, oil, tobacco, and scammony. A great quantity of these merchandizes are conveyed by Armenians overland. The city is of considerable size. An old castle which towers over the sea is the only defence of Smyrna: three galleys and 200 Janissaries constitute the guard. The population consists of 60,000 persons, or thereabouts, and is composed of Turks, Armenians, Greeks, Jews, and Franks. Each nation resides in a separate quarter allotted solely to itself. The quarter of the Franks, which extends along the seashore, is unquestionably the finest. The city consists

almost exclusively of wooden houses, but since the late conflagrations have visited the city, they have employed better materials in rebuilding them. The mosques are not beautiful; the bazaars infinitely surpass their religious houses. The former are long streets which contain nothing but shops from one end to the other. The merchants spread out their different merchandizes with as much art in the bazaars, as could be exhibited in the galleries of the Palais at Paris. This industrious arrangement, and the ingenious disposal of their goods, excite the curiosity, and provoke the desire of the purchaser. The light is admitted to these shops only by an opening from above entering by an aperture in the roof. These roofs or domes covered with lead, protect the merchants and their merchandize, as well as those who buy from exposure to the weather. Smyrna had ancient monuments in other times which contributed to her glory; but the Turks, who feel no curiosity concerning antiquity, have suffered them to perish. We must especially regret the almost total ruin of an amphitheatre, in which innumerable martyrs generously devoted their existence as a sacrifice for the defence of our religion. But time, the universal destroyer, whom nothing can escape, has been unable to obliterate the precious memory of St. Polycarp the martyr. At the venerated age of 86, when he had governed that church to which St. John had sent him for 60 years; as a triumphant crown at the end of his career, St. Polycarp was burned alive; whilst with his heart in his voice he blessed God aloud with gratitude for the grace of martyrdom which he thus granted him. He is honored by the Christians here as their common father, and their protector next to God, and they visit the relics of the amphitheatre

in which his venerated ashes repose from sentiments of respect and devotion for the martyr. The memory of a young man named Germanicus, who, at the same time was exposed to the beasts for Jesus Christ, is honored by them in like manner. These stupendous examples of heroic courage, and those afforded by our former missionaries who followed in their footprints, are powerful motives to an evangelic life.

I shall not pause, my reverend father, to give you the detail of their achievements here, because in doing so I should reiterate what has been related in Father Tarillon's epistle. As to what concerns myself I must be contented to limit my labours to the study of the languages—I have already ventured to teach the children their catechism, and I hope to be able in a little time, with God's assistance, to aid our Fathers in those labours which at present overwhelm them the live long day, and sometimes extend into the night. While writing this letter, I am requested, upon their part, to demand additional labourers from you, a request to which I add my humble voice, as, since my arrival, I have seen the necessity of an addition in the number of missionaries in this flourishing mission.

Our superior dedicates all his time to the instruction of the slaves, who are very numerous in Smyrna. He takes advantage of their exceeding misery to induce some to return to the pleasant ways of salvation, from which even the orthodox so often stray, and others to enter the bosom of the church. One of the very oldest of our missionaries who has reached the venerable age of seventy, and who has spent full forty years in the labours of the mission, supports the heat and toil of

the day with the invincible courage of a true hero of the cross. This venerable man was taken prisoner by the cruel Algerines some years ago, and sold to slavery, a condition which he suffered for two years space with the fortitude and enduring patience of a martyr. We have since been so unhappy as to suffer two losses, in the persons of Father Francis L'Estringant, a native of Orleans, and of Father Francis Braconnier, of the province of Champagne. The first entered the society with a fervid desire to consecrate his life to the service of his neighbour and of God in the foreign missions. He was destined for those which we have in the Levant. He was naturally endowed with all the qualities which are calculated to gain souls to religion, and during the forty years that he has been employed upon our missions he has made a most advantageous use of his qualifications, perfectly performing the functions of an excellent missionary, and of a sage, and experienced superior. He has often risked his life in the service of the plague-sick. He was attacked more than once with the pest, having received it in their service. His recovery was said to be some thing miraculous. He has had the glory of suffering imprisonment and chains for the cause of Jesus Christ—for performing an act of charity. He took no relaxation, he never ceased to labour in the vineyard of the Lord, till he had attained an extreme old age. Full of years and virtues, he has recently died in the service of this mission. The death of Father Braconnier was an universal loss, affecting all our missions. They destined him in France for the first employment in his province, when providence called him to his service here. He succeeded in arriving at Smyrna after having

triumphed over all the obstacles which they opposed to his departure. The talents which God had given him for learning languages made him quickly capable of teaching the children their catechism, and shortly afterwards of hearing confession, of preaching and attending the conferences. He succeeded in these departments in a manner which gained him great reputation—he has been honored with the esteem of our ambassadors. They found him to be a man of excellent judgment, of great rectitude of principle and probity of thinking, cherishing an ardent love of virtue, and having a great capacity for business, with that desirable gift, the utmost firmness in the execution. From all these rare qualities he was judged qualified for government. After having directed some particular missions, he was appointed superior of all those of Greece. The mission of Smyrna which he so much loved, is deeply indebted to him—our establishment at Constantinople owes him equal obligations. He had the affliction of seeing a part of it consumed by the fire which reduced a considerable number of houses in the suburb of Galata to ashes some years since. In this calamity Father Braconnier had recourse to the bounty and liberality of the gentlemen conducting the commerce of Marseilles, the benefactors of all the Levantine missions. He obtained permission from the Ottoman powers, by whom he was known and esteemed, to repair what the fire had destroyed, and to him the glory appertains of restoring our house to the excellent condition in which it is at present. You are well aware, my reverend Father, that after having governed our missions during several successive years, he enterprised the establishment of that which we have at Salonica, in



Macedonia. This worthy missionary, having been informed that the christians who inhabit this city and the neighbouring country, were destitute of all spiritual assistance for working out their salvation, and knowing that much good might be done, instantaneously repaired to Salonica, supported by the hope alone, that God would enable him to find the necessary means of commencing this good work, if it were conformable to the divine will. He did not deceive himself, the work was instituted and perfected by the cares of Father Braconnier—by the liberality of certain christians of the country, and by the services of several French gentlemen, as well as of the Consul of the nation of France. As the commencement and the progress of this novel mission has been detailed to you already, I may dispense with its description. I understand that Father Francis Tarillon having succeeded the late Father Braconnier, and that having Father Xavier Piperi, a native of Scio, as his companion, the piousadventurers are reaping an abundant harvest in this mission. A virtuous lady who is very zealous for God's glory has given them the means of instituting an establishment which is calculated to inspire their disciples with a tender devotion for the august sacrament of our altars. This lady felt herself inspired to institute certain public prayers which are repeated evening and morning, on the Thursdays of every week, in our chapel. The Holy Sacrament is exposed, and our Catholics repair in crowds to honor it, they assist at our sacred mysteries, and are present at the instructions which our missionaries give upon the divine Eucharist. The lady of whom we have spoken, persuaded that the decoration of the altars contributes not a little to the piety of christians

employs many persons in fabricating ornaments which she presents to this flourishing mission, the foundation of which was laid by Father Braconnier. This clergyman was thinking of nothing but the cultivation of his mission, when he received an order from the Father General to proceed to Persia, in order to succeed the superior of our missions in that kingdom who had recently departed. However great the attachment of Father Braconnier for his mission at Salonica, he immediately abandoned it, preferring obedience to his own inclination.

In spite of indisposition, which would have retained any one in the world but himself, and in spite of a presentiment that his days would be shortened by this journey; feeble as he was, he set out for Persia—he suffered much in endeavouring to attain the Dardanelles. As soon as he set foot on shore, the Consul, who was always a bosom friend of his, received him with a warm embrace, conducting him to his mansion that he might reside there. That which was, comparatively speaking, but a slight sickness at first, in a few days afterwards became a mortal malady. He dispatched a request to a religious person who was renowned far and near for his sanctity, who happened at this time to be sojourning at the Dardanelles, to come and visit him and receive his last sighs. He received the rites of religion with sentiments which his departing voice conveyed to those around him, who felt convinced, as they regarded him, that that decent pallet was pressed by the ashes of a saint. He finally gave up his soul to God, by offering him the sacrifice of a life which had always been devoted to him.

I beg of you, my reverend father, to supplicate the Lord, that having come here to work out the salvation

of my soul and the sanctification of the people who surround us, I may seek at least, by a fervent and penitential life, to deserve a death as precious as that of Father Braconnier. This favour is asked by one who is your's, &c.

SKETCHES  
OF THE  
TOWN AND PRECINCTS OF ALEPPO.

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The city of Aleppo, in which I have had the honor of being a missionary during several years, is not like Damascus, rich in ancient and noble monuments; but in extent, and in its commerce, and consequently, in its riches, it surpasses the latter city. It is these advantages which render it one of the most celebrated cities in the Turkish empire. It had many names in ancient times, an account of the origin of which was given in one of the first letters of this collection.

The town is of an oval figure, and is about three miles in circumference. The towers and walls by which it is surrounded, do not appear very capable of defending it. They reckon ten gates to the city, and many of its entrances are very fine. Deep in the earth, under one of these gates, there runs a spacious cavern, which is constantly illuminated in honour of the prophet Eliseus, who is said to have selected this grotto as a place of refuge for a considerable time.

The houses of the town have nothing remarkable

externally, but their interior is enriched by those who have sufficient wealth, with marble, and gilding, and painting.

It is said that the very finest of the mosques was a church originally, the foundation of which is attributed to St. Helena. Thus in order to punish the enormities of bad Christians, Heaven permits whole nations to deviate from the beaten path, and lose the light of faith, and stumble blindfold into the pitfalls of schism and heresy, whose authors were as full of corruption as their fabrications.

Though the Mahometan religion is at Aleppo the paramount one, Catholics are very numerous in Aleppo, notwithstanding. Father Nacchis' letter contains particulars of the several exercises of our religion, which are practised in this city, and we see, thank Heaven, striking examples of the practice of the most excellent virtues of Christianity.

The commerce carried on in all descriptions of merchandize conveyed to this place from Persia and India, renders Aleppo very populous; but it is remarked, that this commerce, which was in former times so flourishing, has diminished considerably since the Cape of Good Hope was doubled, and merchants have reached India by sea. They willingly prefer this navigation to that which is made up the Euphrates and the Tigris, because the river navigation is interrupted by a multitude of mills which have been constructed on the Euphrates, and because the Tigris is navigable no farther than from Bagdad to Bassora. But if the city of Aleppo has lost some of its commerce by this alteration, if merchants have failed to throng her gates as numerously as hereto-



fore, amends are made by the frequent and populous caravans which repair to Aleppo for the purpose of proceeding from one city to another. These caravans are composed of travellers from all nations, and consist for the most part of merchants, who themselves conduct their camels laden with their merchandize. When you perceive one of these caravans afar off for the first time, you imagine it an army drawn up in battle array. It has a chief who governs, conducts, and presides over it; he regulates the hours for marching, for reposing, and for repasts; he is arbitrator of all the differences which arise between traveller and traveller. These caravans have their advantages and disadvantages. It is in the first place, a great advantage to the traveller to be able to obtain every thing he wants, or may have need of in so long a journey without any difficulty whatsoever, or without quitting the caravan. Each caravan is attended by its sutlers, who carry all descriptions of provisions, and who night and day are always ready to make sale of them. But the paramount advantage to merchants who have much wealth, is the security they afford from the depredations of the Arabs, who are robbers by profession, and whose only means of subsistence are the plundering of such caravans. The chief of the caravan, lest the Arabs should surprise them, causes his people to institute a vigilant guard, which never ceases night or day; but, notwithstanding all their watchfulness, it happens but too frequently that these enemies of all travellers, informed as to the strength and destination of the caravan, shrink into ambush, and when favoured by the night, by suddenly emerging upon the merchants, succeed in carrying off considerable booty. Having accomplished

their object, they disappear across the wilderness, the desert-paths being only known to themselves.

The most celebrated caravan of all is that which issues every year from the gates of Aleppo and Damascus, destined for Mahomet's tomb. Having been a missionary at either of these cities, I have been often present when this caravan was taking its departure. Perhaps, I shall give you some pleasure in describing what I saw. The caravan, of which I have spoken, commonly departs for Mecca in the month of July. Pilgrims are seen arriving about this time from Persia, Hindostan, and the other empires through which the disciples of Mahomet are disseminated. The pilgrims make a general procession some days before the departure of the caravan, which they call the procession of Mahomet, to obtain, as they tell us, a prosperous journey through the intercession of their prophet. The pilgrims who are most distinguished for birth and riches, endeavour, on the day of this procession, to appear in the most magnificent apparel. The lordly pilgrim, mounted on a superb courser, richly caparisoned, is followed at a respectful distance by his slaves, who lead camels by the bridle, which are decorated with the most splendid ornaments. At the rising of the sun the procession commences, and the streets are already full with an infinite number of spectators. The pilgrims who are said to be descendants of the prophet open the march. They are clothed in long garments, with green turbans on their heads—a privilege which the pretended relations of Mahomet are alone permitted to enjoy. They march, four and four a breast, and are followed by musicians, playing upon divers instruments; after them, with stately step, in different ranks, the ca-

camels, ornamented with their plumes of feathers, of different colours, are seen advancing. There are two tymbaliers at their head. The music of the drums, or timbrels, and the flourishing of the trumpets, and of a great number of musical instruments, inspire these animals with audacity and pride. Six and six the other pilgrims of the caravan are seen marching at a solemn pace, followed by litters filled with children, who are to be presented by their fathers and mothers to the prophet. These litters are surrounded with troops of choristers, who, while intoning their chaunts, assume a thousand extraordinary postures, in order to make persons imagine them inspired. They are followed by a train of 200 cavaliers, apparelled in the skins of bears. These are succeeded by small pieces of artillery, mounted upon carriages, salvos of which are heard from time to time, while the air resounds at intervals with acclamations of jubilee from that universe of people. A company of cavaliers, apparelled in the skins of tigers, which are disposed in the form of a cuirass, succeed their long mustachios, Tartar caps, together with enormous sabres pendant at their sides, render their appearance imposing and belligerent. Four hundred infantry in green, and wearing a species of yellow mitre on their heads, precede the Mufti, accompanied by the doctors of the law, and an immense troop of choristers. The Mufti appears in advance of the standard of Mahomet, which follows him immediately. This standard is made of green satin, embroidered with gold. His guard consists of twelve cavaliers, in coats of mail, bearing silver maces in their hands, accompanied by trumpeters, and a troop of persons who all strike simultaneously, and in cadence, upon

plates of silver. The pavilion destined to be presented at Mahomet's tomb, afterwards appears carried by three camels, covered with green plumes, and glittering with silver. The pavilion is of crimson velvet, enriched with gold embroidery, and blazing with precious stones of every colour. The dancers, who are hired for the purpose, dance exultingly, and counterfeit inspired and extraordinary men. The Bashaw of Jerusalem finally appears preceded by drums and trumpets, and other Turkish instruments of music, and concludes the long line of the procession. The procession ended, each pilgrim is occupied only with preparations for his departure. The town of Mecca is the period of the pilgrimage. This town is situate in Arabia the Happy, at four miles' distance from the Red Sea. It is the opinion of the Turks, that their prophet was born in this city, and this opinion it is which gives them so great a veneration for it. They give it no other name when speaking of it but that of the Magnificent : when they say their prayers, which is several times a day, they never fail to turn their faces towards this city, let them be in what country they may. Their mosque is in the middle of Mecca : it is situate, they pretend, upon the very site on which Abraham constructed his first residence. The square house, so revered by the Turks, is in the centre of this mosque ; for tradition has informed them, that Abraham's dwelling was quadrangular. The mosque is very handsome and extensive, and as fine as gilding and painting can make it, and all the votive gifts which the disciples of Mahomet send thither by way of reverence. The city of Mecca and its mosque are announced at a very great distance to the pilgrims, by the stupendous elevation of its

minarets. Near the Kaaba, or the square house, there is a species of chapel, in which there is a well of much celebrity amongst the Turks; they call it Zem-zem. This water issues from a source, their historians tell us, which was discovered, in former times, by God to Agar and to Ishmael, when, driven from his residence by Abraham, they were constrained to take refuge in Arabia. Mahomet took advantage of this well to recommend his native city to the whole circle of his followers; for he proclaimed that the water had the virtue of not only curing all sorts of corporeal maladies, but of even purifying souls sullied with the greatest crimes; and so well is this chimerical opinion established amongst the Mussulmans, that troops of way-worn pilgrims are seen constantly arriving and hastening to this well to drink this water, and to bathe in it. Traders in every description of jewellery, and merchants selling gems, of every hue, spread out their brilliant merchandize, as well as certain aromatic powders, beside this venerated water—their sale is very extensive. These merchants are under many obligations to the chimerical virtue of this water, which continually attracts, in equal numbers, criminals of every description, and patients afflicted with every species of sickness. Though the country by which Mecca is surrounded is extremely arid, it does not fail to produce great quantities of fruit, of the finest quality. The Turks attribute this fertility to the promise made by God to Agar and her son, to give them all that should be necessary for their subsistence in the country whither the angel was to conduct them. The city of Medina is not less venerated by the Mussulmans; the reason is recounted by the historians of Arabia,



jealous of Mahomet becoming a legislator, being followed by multitudes who listened to his opinions as to the words of an oracle. The inhabitants of Mecca formed a conspiracy to expel him from their city, but having been informed of their design by his disciples, he secretly fled with two of his adherents, and concealed himself in a cavern, which he found upon the mountain named Tour, which is not at more than the distance of a league from Mecca. The same historians inform us, that not thinking himself sufficiently safe in this asylum, he abandoned it, and took refuge at Medina, with two persons, who shared his fortunes, and whose fears were as great as those of their master. Mahomet was, at this time, as the historians tell us, five-and-forty years of age. He had spent fourteen of these in preaching his new doctrine. His flight from Mecca, and retreat to Medina, have given a commencement to the first Hegira of the Mussulmans. Finding himself tranquil in this city, the novel legislator began to dogmatize anew. His reputation, as a man divinely inspired and favoured with the gift of prophecy, the morals of his new law, so conformable to the passions of human nature, in a little time attracted a multitude of followers about him, not only from the neighbouring districts, but from countries more remote. He converted these numerous disciples into subjects, who obeyed him as their sovereign. Ultimately, he found himself at the head of such a multitude, that he conceived himself capable of any enterprise. The resentment which he cherished against his fellow-citizens in Mecca, who had endeavoured to expel him from the place of his birth, led him to seek for vengeance; in the first place he conceived that he should inflict it in a man-

ner which should hurt them to the quick, by declaring that Medina should henceforth be his city, and the seat of the empire of himself and his successors. He ordained that his sepulchre should be constructed in Medina, and accordingly, at the present day, his coffin is to be seen in the great mosque named Kaaba. As Christians are never permitted to enter this mosque, it is only from hearsay that we know that his coffin is enclosed in a structure in a corner of the great mosque; that it is deposited upon columns of marble; that it is covered with a tent, composed of cloth of gold; that it is surrounded with a multitude of lamps which never cease to burn, and that the walls of this tower are sheathed with plates of gilded silver. To this tomb it is that the caravans repair to offer up their homage. The caravan which carries the presents of the Grand Signior is no sooner arrived, than the Dervises, whose business it is to take care of the mosque, present themselves to receive this caravan. The pilgrims make the mosque re-echo with their cries of jubilee, and with the intonation of their canticles in honour of the prophet. An uninterrupted series of festivals and rejoicing succeed, until the departure of the caravan—a day on which the pilgrims assemble, and, while departing from the town, they chant verses from the Alcoran aloud. The relatives and friends of the pilgrims, aware of the movement of the caravan, present themselves before the travellers to offer them refreshments.

Along the route, all the people, amongst whom they pass, consider themselves honoured in carrying them collations. It is, above all, when the caravan returns that the pilgrims are overwhelmed with congratulations—

the town from which they originally set out for Mecca becomes mad with mirth. Wherever they appear, every one delights to do them honor. They enjoy those privileges from that day forward, which are conceded by the religion of the Turks to all such personages as visit the sepulchre of their prophet; and of all these privileges the most indispensable to many of those pilgrims is that perfect exemption from the penalties attached to crimes for which Ottoman justice would condemn these devotees only for their character of Hadjees.\* Covering a multitude of sins, as it does, the pilgrimage to Mecca sequesters them from all pursuit, and transforms criminals of the deepest dye into men of unimpeached and spotless integrity. This is by no means the least effective of those secrets which Mahomet adopted to bring his mausoleum into estimation, and to extend the privileges of his sect.

But the reader will be egregiously mistaken if he imagines that it is merely to the pilgrims to Mecca that important privileges are conceded. The camel that enjoyed the honour of bearing on his back the presents from the Grand Signior, possesses privileges of his own. His prerogative consists in being regarded no longer as a common animal;—the brute is considered as possessing the felicity of being consecrated to Mahomet—a title which exempts him for the residue of his years from public labours and the services of mankind; a cottage is erected for his abode—he resides there in tranquillity and repose; he combines dignity and ease, being well fed and carefully attended to. The pilgrimage to Mecca

\* Pilgrims.

gave occasion to our seeing the king of the Usbecks, several years ago, when passing through Aleppo, and repairing to the sepulchre, the king was proceeding to finish his days beside the prophet's tomb.

It had been the hard destiny of this prince to see his subjects rise against him in rebellion, with his son at their head, who laboured to dethrone his father and obtain possession of his kingdom—a son who was so atrocious as to cause the eyes of his parent to be plucked out, that he might resign all hopes of ever re-ascending the throne. We saw this unfortunate prince pass by us, mounted upon horseback, with a bandage on his eyes; fifty guards-men, armed with quivers and arrows, escorted him. Every eye glistened with tears while contemplating this melancholy spectacle. Word was brought us, since that memorable day, that heaven had fully avenged this unhappy father, and punished his cruel son. The son died a miserable death, and his subjects returned to their legitimate king: they re-established him upon his throne and obeyed him with more submission than ever.

The Usbecks are Tartars who live in the neighbourhood of Persia: they are governed by four distinct sovereigns, who are independent of each other. The most powerful of these is the king of Balek. The second is the sovereign of Koweresmy, otherwise Urghinz. The third is the monarch of Chakar. The fourth is the king of Kytar.

The costume of the Usbecks is the same as that of the Moguls. They make use of shafts and javelins. They launch the latter with astonishing address. Their disposition is naturally humane and benevolent. They have a love for strangers; and whatever be the religion

they profess, they treat foreigners invariably with kindness. Their country is good, like the disposition of its inhabitants, and abounds in every thing necessary for the sustenance and accommodation of its people. They trade with the Persians and the circumjacent Tartars, and with even the Chinese, though the country of the latter is so remote. In their country, emeralds, rubies, as well as other precious stones, wool, cotton, silk and linen, and very fine webs, are to be found. They even speak of rivers that run on golden sands.

As to what concerns their religion, it does not seem at all incredible that their ancestors professed the Roman Catholic religion. Their natural disposition is serene. Their qualities are such as dispose men to the practice of the Christian virtues;\* but through the commerce which they continually carry on with the Mahometans, they became susceptible of the manners of the latter, and have received their law. A sensible demonstration that much may be lost in the society of heretics and libertines.

We have frequent reason to reflect upon a circumstance, which in this country is very advantageous to the Catholic religion, this is, that the Mahometan superstition, which is paramount throughout its extent, is divided and torn asunder by different sects, which loathe and abhor one another mutually.

The cause of which may be found in the nature of the human mind; for when the latter has nothing more than reason to determine and give it stability in what appertains to religion above all, it enterprises a faith after

\* For the religion of these people, see "O'Brien's Round Towers."  
T. A. P.



a fashion of its own ; that is, one which is necessarily conformed to the false intelligences of the mind, or more frequently still, to the corruption of the heart, but which is in all cases tinctured more or less by the medium through which it has passed, and the mind assumes the religion which sits most easily upon it, as naturally as bodily deformity adopts a capacious robe.

This is a reflection which we cause our christians to make, in order to sustain them in the Catholic religion, insinuating at the same their invaluable advantages in having in the decisions of the Church an infallible rule, which prescribes on all occasions and in all the disputes which happen to arise amongst us, what should be believed and practised in order to conduct us in the way of salvation. Admirable effect of celestial wisdom ! which has given alike to the humble and the great, to the ignorant as well as to the learned, the certain and unfailing means of knowing what they are to follow and embrace ; “ there is a way in which fools may walk with safety.”

After this digression, which the caravans which leave Aleppo have given rise to, I shall return, if you please, my Rev. Father, to the account which you require of us of whatever may be deserving of attention in this country.

When directing his steps to Tripoly, the traveller encounters, at two days' journey from Aleppo, the celebrated city of Antioch, which was entitled by the Emperor Justinian, Theopolis, or Town of God. Which deserved this glorious name, as St. Peter the prince of the apostles held his See therein, and formed the first believers of this city into true disciples of Jesus Christ,

who profited so happily by the lessons of their master, that they richly merited to be the first who wore the august name of Christians. The apostles held a council in this city, the canons of which St. Pamphylus the Martyr saw in the library of Origen.

The eloquent preaching of John Chrysostom to the people of this city, will ever do honour to the memory of Antioch, which has been so happy as to possess this ancient Father, and to receive from his eloquent lips his sublime and salutary instructions.

When remembering the ancient spiritual splendour of this city, we cannot fail to mourn its unhappiness in having fallen into the bondage of the infidels. Of those grand and superb edifices, nothing remains but the mouldering ruins; but Divine Providence has interposed to preserve the sanctuary of the church of St. Peter, in remembrance of the honour it enjoyed in having formerly possessed St. Peter's chair.

This city deserved to be preserved for its happy situation. It stands in the middle of a mighty plain watered by streams that give it fertility in every season. Orontes, a river which contributed to enrich it, still bathes its dilapidated walls. From the ruined ramparts two mountains may be seen, and a paradise is offered to the view in the valley which they form.

Between Antioch, of which we have just spoken, and the town of Tripoly, and to the east of Tortosa, (a town which was called Antaradus by the ancients,) a plain is to be seen twelve miles in length and six in latitude, where it ultimately rises into elevations. These mountains were formerly inhabited by people who called themselves Arsacides, pretending to be descendants of that famous

Arsaces, who, after the death of Alexander, founded the empire of the Parthians.

These people, who emerged from the confines of Persia, near Babylon, in the seventh century, formed a little kingdom in a corner of Phenicia. They erected ten strongholds upon inaccessible rocks, from which they rendered themselves formidable to all the vicinity. Their depredations and assassinations obtained for them the odious title of assassins ; a detestable title expressive of their cruelty.

The assassins elected a chief amongst themselves, who called himself the Old Man of the Mountain, a celebrated name in contemporary history. He bore this name, because, as it was said, their choice always fell upon the oldest man of the nation, or because he inhabited a castle named Almut, or Alamut, situated on a lofty mountain, where to attack him was almost impossible. In mentioning this, our old historians shew very little knowledge of Arabic. The signification of Scheik is old or senior, but it likewise signifies Lord. It is not true that the assassins selected the oldest person in the nation for their prince, and we should translate in reality, the *Lord of the Mountain*. His empire over his subjects was so absolute, that if he required the commission of the most monstrous enormities, they were always ready to execute them at the first command that he gave them to that effect, and even at the peril of their own existence. They are accused of the assassination of Louis of Bavaria in 1231, and of making an attempt on the life of St. Louis. The Sieur de Joinville makes no mention of

\* Their name is likewise said to be derived from that of their founder, Hassan Sabah.

this ; on the contrary, he asserts that their prince sent presents in 1252 to that sainted monarch.

They profess the Mahometan religion ; but so frail was their tenure of attachment to this faith, that they negociated with the templars to embrace Christianity, if the tribute which they were compelled to pay the Christians were rescinded. This condition was rejected by the templars, and this refusal, says William of Tyre, caused the Christians to lose the realm of Jerusalem.— That a nation so monstrous should be able to maintain its existence for four hundred years, appears perfectly astonishing. It was only in 1257 that the Tartars, under their king, Allen, or Haloën, in order to deliver the country from such dangerous neighbours, undertook to massacre the chief, and extirpate his people, an enterprise in which they succeeded. We know no people at the present day in this country, who bear the name of assassins. But it is not impossible but the Kesbins, a nation which inhabit the mountains which are at two days' journey from Tripoli, and the Nassarians, another nation established in the plain towards the sea, it is not impossible, I repeat, but these may be the successors of the assassins. These nations inhabit the same country as they did, and besides there is an intimate connexion between the religion which was professed by the Assassins, and that which the Kesbins and Nassarians observe ; these two nations, Kesbins and Nassarians as they are, may be considered as forming a single people. Those who inhabit the mountains are denominated Kesbins, as the name of their country is Kesbià, those who inhabit the plain are called Nassarians, an expression equivalent to that of *bad Christians*, an appellation which might be

applied to the former equally well, for their religion is a monstrous composition of Mahometanism and Christianity, a circumstance which gives them an extravagant idea of our holy mysteries. The doctors of their sect are entitled Scheiks. These doctors support them in their fond imaginations. They teach, for instance, that God has appeared, not only in the person of Jesus Christ, but in that of Abraham, in Moses, and in many celebrated persons of the ancient Testament. They even do Mahomet the honor of conceding him a similar prerogative, a belief so absurd, that the Turks have not fallen into it. This is not all ; they consider themselves as doing honor to Jesus Christ in declaring that he did not die upon the cross—they imagine that he substituted another person who suffered in his place ; thus they say that by the ordination of Mahomet, another body, different from his own, was deposited in the sepulchre which had been prepared for that celebrated impostor.

They admit the metempsychoses moreover, and imagine that the same soul passes from one body to another, never ending its transmigrations till it has passed through seventy, but with this difference, that the soul of a good man enters a body more perfect than his own, whilst that of a sinful person enters the body of some impure creature.

They have borrowed communion from the Christians, but the manner in which they practice it is perfectly fanatical, for the elements are wine and a morsel of meat. Women and infants are excluded, and they admit only men to this communion. The practice is observed in secret assemblies by the men amongst themselves. They observe some of our festivals, that of Christmas, that of



the Circumcision of our Lord, the Epiphany, the Sabbath of Palms, as well as that of Easter, together with some festivals of the apostles and the saints. When they pray, they turn towards the sun, which makes some assert that that planet is worshipped by this people, but they do not admit that such is the fact. I omit many of their customs, as in many instances their customs are only extravagances. They are, notwithstanding, much attached to them, persuaded, as they seem to be, that their religion is not inferior to that of the Maronites, as some of the practices of that faith are observed by them.

Many of our missionaries have sought to gain some of them to Christianity, but as they listen with attention only to their own false teachers, and are reluctant to follow any sentiments but those in which they have been educated; despairing of their conversion, our missionaries have often been obliged to shake the dust from their shoes. We learn an invariable lesson from the experience of all ages. As soon as the rule of the Catholic faith which our Saviour gave to conduct us without failing in the solitary way of safety is forsaken, the errors into which men fall are only to be equalled by the variety of character exhibited by the human mind. This is what St. Paul wished to impress upon the Romans, when he said that those men who deemed themselves wise and high, above the common herd, went astray in their vain reasonings, and that their insensate spirit, through the judgment of the deity, had been overwhelmed with frightful blindness, a misfortune which falls not upon those vigorous intellects alone who refuse any arbitrator in modes of faith except reason—it is a misfortune inherited even by the ignorant, when in lieu of

obeying the enunciations of religion they suffer themselves to be inveigled and carried off captives to those false ones whom the church denounces and repudiates. This has been the fate of the nations whom we have been describing, as well as of others in our own more immediate vicinity. The Ishmaelites too, who occupy a little territory called Cadmus, are of this number.— Their life is so brutal and shameful, that they do not deserve to be spoken of, unless to humiliate mankind, by shewing us that there is no degree of baseness, no extravagance or disorder to which we may not descend, when our passions are our only guides. We have another nation in our mountains, whose origin and religion are equally mysterious. These people are called Druses; they inhabit a portion of mount Libanus, as well as the mountains beyond Sayd and Balbec, and the country of Giblos, or Gibail, and of Tripoli. The Druses extend as far as Egypt. As to their origin, if they themselves be consulted, they will tell you that their ancestors were some of those followers of Godfrey of Bouillon, who came with him in 1099 from Europe to Jerusalem, and that after the loss of the latter city they took refuge in the mountains from the fury of the Turks; for they were persecuted and pursued, wherever they appeared by the latter people, who sought to accomplish the destruction and massacre of the remains of christianity, the very name of which was odious to them. Some writers bestow on them a different origin, pretending that a Count of Dreux having been discomfited by Saladin in the time of the Crusades, the soldiers of the Count retired and intrenched themselves in the mountains, and that having subse-

quently multiplied, they established habitations and took the name of Druses from the Count of Dreux, who had been their leader. But as it is certain that this nation bore their present name in the country which is now inhabited by them, anterior to the Crusades, their origin is indisputably much more ancient than that which is given them by their own accounts, or which European writers attribute to them. If we may judge by their books, their name of Druses has its derivation from the Arabic word, *deuz*, which signifies that line where the two parts of the skull which constitute the perfect human head are united, for it is very certain that the authors of their books frequently compare the perfect union of the two portions of the human skull with that political union which should constantly pervade the nation. For by this comparison the authors of their books give their readers to understand, that as the preservation of the human being depends upon the intimate union of the two parts of which the skull is composed, so the perpetuity of the nation of the Druses will always depend upon the unanimity of all its members, in maintaining and defending themselves against their enemies, as well as by their uniformity in constantly observing the customs, practices, and ceremonies handed down to them by their progenitors. This comparison, repeated so frequently in their books, being admitted, we may easily suppose that from this word *deuz*, which signifies, as we have said, the line that lies between the two portions of the skull, the suture of the cranium, this nation was at first called by the Arabic word, *durzi*, or in the plural *durouz*, that is to say, in English, the nation who preserve their unity and uniformity, and it is from these Arabic appellatives that

that of Druses is derived, corruptively, a name which has remained constantly affixed to this nation. The Druses of the present day recognise, as their legislator, a Sultan of Egypt, of the dynasty of the Fatimites, whose name is Maoulana el Hakem Biemrilla, that is to say, our Lord el Hakem Biemrillah. His reign began in the year of Jesus Christ, 996, which is 386 of the Hegira. He was honored by his disciples as their king, and they never appeared in his presence unless physically prostrated. The religion of the Druses is a monstrous composition of maxims and practices, which they have retained from the Christianity which they anciently professed, mingled with Mahomedan customs and ceremonies which they have subsequently adopted on account of the continual commerce which they carry on with the Turks, or from the political motive of conciliating their protection, and exciting their benevolence. They keep, with the utmost care, the volume, scroll, or book, which their legislator left them. This book contains three sections which are in the form of letters; they contain, the Druses say, all the mystery of their religion. Besides the first legislator, they recognise another, who had been his disciple. They call him Hamze, a holy man in their opinion. Three books of their law were composed for them by Hamze, and this law prohibits all communication of these books to strangers: I do not know whether it be upon this account or not, that they bury it under ground. They bring them forth every Friday, the day on which they hold their meetings, to read them to the public. Amongst the Druses, the females have the reputation of being best acquainted with their religion, which confers much distinction on the women of these people. Those

by whom the female portion of the community are instructed, and by whom the contents of the books of their two legislators are explained to the women, are likewise of the feminine gender. Above all things, secrecy is recommended to them, and it is observed by these women so strictly, that all we have been hitherto able to learn is simply, that these books contain extravagant narratives, with which the minds of Druses are imbued. We know, moreover, that there are two kinds of Druses, the one is called in Arabic, Ukkal, or the spiritual, the other is entitled Dgiuhhal, or the ignorant. The spiritual may be easily distinguished by their garments, which are invariably sad coloured, besides which they never wear a weapon in their girdle, carrying neither a dagger nor any other arms, as they pretend to derive all their distinction from the comparative reformation of their manners. They are seldom seen in public; they seclude themselves in caves as if they were monastic cells, in order to remove from the pleasures of the world. They live on little, and as they have the utmost horror of their neighbour's property, they refuse whatever may be offered them, from the apprehension that the presents which you make them may not have been legitimately come by. They receive gifts with less readiness from the rich than from the peasants, persuaded as they are, that the latter have procured them with more honesty, and only give what they earn by the sweat of their brow. These spirituals conform to the Koran and submit to circumcision; they observe the fast of the Ramadan, and the abstinence from pork, as well as many other superstitions of the Turks. As to what concerns those who are designated Dgiuhhal by the



Druses, "the ignorant," they are never to be seen in the assembly with the spiritual. They absolutely ignore the heart of their mysteries; we may venture to assert, that that they live without religion, and therefore in a state of libertinism, which they conceive to be allowable with them. They suppose that all their duties have been satisfied when they have repeated a few prayers in honor of their founder Hakem Biemrillah, and when they have employed certain terms in their prayers which the spiritual make use of in their orisons. These terms are in Arabic, *ma fil illah alla hue*, that is to say, *there is no other deity save God*. This prayer is their profession of faith; they repeat it often enough, above all when repairing to the statue of Hakim to do homage. Two of the villages alone enjoy the honour of speaking the language of the Druses, and of possessing the statue of their legislator. His statue, according to their law, should either be of gold or silver. They enclose it in a wooden coffer, and never reveal it to the light except in their great ceremonies. When they address their vows to their founder, to obtain what they stand in need of, they seem to imagine themselves speaking to the deity himself, their veneration for this idol is so unlimited. The two villages, which alone have the privilege of preserving it, are called Bagelin and Fredis: they are situated in the mountains, where the chiefs of the Druses reside. We have related now all that we have been able to learn concerning the religion of the Druses. We go often on a mission to the Catholic inhabitants of their country, but we always have the grief of seeing that this nation is very far from the kingdom of God. True it is that they love the Christians, and love not the Turks. It is also

true, that they prefer to call themselves Christians rather than Turks, though they wear the turban and the emerald cestus, and they receive us with willingness and joy ; but notwithstanding this favourable disposition, their inviolable attachment for their ancient faith, which is only an incongruous collection of mingled practices and ceremonies of Christianity and of Mahometanism, their obstinate unwillingness to listen to instruction, give us just grounds of apprehension, lest this nation continue to shut its eyes with even still more obstinacy to the light of the gospel, which the sun of justice never ceases to shed radiantly around them. It is this reflection which urges us to conjure such persons as heaven may inspire with zeal for the salvation of mens' souls, to unite with us in reiterating demands for the conversion of this nation, and of many other realms which have participated equally in the blood of Jesus Christ, but which are banished by the monsters of heresy and schism from the bosom of the church, and sent far astray from all the paths of peace, from all the ways of salvation.—My Rev. Father, we shall add nothing more to what we have related concerning the condition of the two first towns of Syria, Damascus and Aleppo, and their environs. All that appeared to us to be little known in France, and to merit, notwithstanding to be better known, has been embraced by this recital. In future, we shall endeavour to observe with more exactitude than hitherto, and to set down, likewise, to as great an extent as our employments will permit us, whatsoever may be worthy of enquiry, which we shall send you without fail ; upon your part, procure us, if you please, the succour of the prayers of all such persons as may wish to contribute to

the augmentation of the kingdom of Christ Jesus. Send us a reinforcement of good labourers ; they are demanded by the nations of Syria and Persia. We have reliance in the Monarch of mercies, and the Master of all wealth—we trust that France will provide for our subsistence.

## TO FATHER FLEURIAU.

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MY REVEREND FATHER,

No one is so well aware as you that the the missions of our society in Syria have always been invested with the strongest attractions for your servant. I experienced these attractions so early as my noviceship, on reading those relations that informed us of the labours of our missionaries in those extensive provinces of the realm of infidelity.

The fruits produced by their apostleship, the consolation afforded them by treading in the traces of Christ Jesus, filled me with ardent aspirations for following in their foot-prints, for treading above all, within that sacred territory, the first missionaries of which were Christ and the apostles. God has granted me the grace of preserving this vocation as well during the years of my regency as during my studies in theology. In the third year of my probation, this predilection became more imperative. I addressed myself, at that time, to the Rev. Father General: I requested his permission to consecrate my life to the salvation of the nations inhabiting the holy land and the circumjacent provinces, so often irrigated with the sweat of Christ Jesus. I have not for-

gotten your good offices, my Father, to procure me the permission I sighed for with such earnestness: no day passes by me that, when ministering at the altar, I fail to remember my revered benefactor. A favour, in addition, which was very dear to me when I was coming to this country, and which, by means of your mediation, has been vouchsafed me, augments the obligations under which you have placed me. My vocation for the Syrian mission gave birth, in my bosom, to the same desire which, subsequently to his conversion, St Ignatius conceived. I relinquished France with joyful feelings, and traversed the Mediterranean in the hope of being able speedily to offer up my vows in the temple of Jerusalem, and at the hallowed foot of the sepulchre of our Saviour. My desires, my Rev. Father, have been listened to: I have visited, my Father, yes, I have visited that holy city in which the sublime mystery of our redemption was accomplished, and where, at every foot-fall, you discover objects which are all so many touching testimonies of the illimitable love of God for the salvation of mankind. Happy should I be if so many holy monuments, which one by one I have so long stood over and contemplated, and of which the recollection so frequently recurs to me; happy should I be if they preserved in my inmost heart the sentiments of piety and religion, which those memorials are so well calculated to inspire. Sir, in pursuance of my promise, I present to you the relation of my voyages. Receive it, I beseech you, as a memento of my gratitude. But I must apprise you, previously to entering on my narrative, that its only dignity must be derived from the lofty and sacred character of the places I shall describe to you. It was from the port of



Sayd, a maritime city of Phenicia, that we embarked for Palestine. In the ancient times, this city was called Sidon. You are well aware that we had a mission there at one time. We did not succeed in quitting the harbour of this city till we made many fruitless efforts for that purpose: contrary winds compelled us to re-enter as often as we emerged. Heaven, on this occasion, wished to teach me to repress, restrain, and subjugate my impatience to reach Jerusalem, to assist at the celebration of our august mysteries, solemnized during the period of Holy Week. Finally, on the 7th of April, which was the Monday of Passion week, our vessel took the wind in a favourable moment, crowded as it was with pilgrims, who were desirous to pluck the palms of Palestine and the olives of Gethsemani. The delay which we had experienced in the first efforts at departure, served only to aggravate the joy which I subsequently proved at seeing our vessel plough the sea for the harbour of my desires. Having issued from the port of Sidon, we coasted near that city, then skirted Sarepta, and, subsequently, we passed with a flowing sheet by Tyre, and likewise by Cape Blanc. Sarepta, which was a great city and a sea-port before now, is at present but an arable and open field, bisected by the road that leads you to Tyre. The relics of a ruined pavement and some dilapidated houses, whose destruction has not hitherto been perfectly accomplished by Time, announce a city which, at one time, was considerable, but which is now no more. This city is said to have carried on a great commerce in brass and iron in anterior times, in which the name which it bears of Sarepta has originated; for

the name of Sarepta is derivative from the junction of two words, the one signifying iron, and the other meaning brass. They find neither of these metals in this place at the present day. In the third Book of Kings this city is denominated *Sarepta of the Sidonians*, because this city was a *Satellite* of Sidon. A mosque, of small dimensions, at some paces from Sarepta, ascends above the margin of the sea. The Turks, and, indeed, the Christians of the country, pretend that it stands upon the spot where the prophet Elias operated the two signal miracles, which the third Book of Kings has transmitted to us.\*

The first was the multiplication of a handful of flour and of some drops of oil; God granted this increase at the petition of the prophet to recompense the fidelity and the charity of that widow, who in the time of universal famine, having nothing in the world for her own subsistence and her son's, save this drop of oil and this small quantity of flour, offered both the one and the other with a profuse open heart, which would have given kingdoms if she had them, to the prophet in his necessity. The second miracle was the resurrection of this widow's son. The prophet, coming to lodge in the mansion of the widow, found her offspring lying dead and the destitute mother quite desolate. Elias, touched with feelings of compassion, took the infant from the mother's hands and bore him to his chamber, then addressing the God of Abraham, of Isaac and Jacob, restored the son, redolent of vitality, to his parent. We are informed by Saint Jerome, in his epitaph on Paula, that this virtuous

lady, when visiting the sepulchre, was conducted to the little dwelling of this holy widow hard by the harbour of Sarepta; 'twas the holy abode which served Elias as an hospital.

According to a tradition of the Hebrews, this resuscitated infant was the prophet Jonas. Supposing this to be the case then, when he preached penitence to Nineveh, the age of the prophet was, to say the least of it, exceedingly mature.

At three quarters of a league from Sarepta, a long chain of rocks is seen, extending for a considerable way, in which excavations have been made in the form of crosses, which are five or six feet in depth, and the entrance to which is little more than two feet square. It is difficult to decide for what purpose they were made: according to the natives of the country, they were hollowed out by hermits, who, retiring to these places, took up their residence in graves, the better to meditate on death. I prefer the opinion of such persons as imagine that these excavations were sepulchres destined to inhumate the inhabitants of Sarepta, who were eminent for their riches. Be they sepulchres or cells, their appellation is *adnoun*.

Nothing is to be seen that much merits our attention from the site of these caves to the river Eleutherus. They say this river derives its source from the summits of Mount Libanus. Traversing Gallilee and Ituræa to enter the Phœnician sea, it separates the territory of Sidon from the country of Tyre, which procures it the name of Kasemeeh or Cassimer, by which it is known at the present day, signifying separation; the windings of this river, which run at the foot of the mountains, impart no small celerity to its current. The turtle

fishery, which is exceedingly abundant in certain seasons of the year, gives to it very great importance in this country ; but that which confers upon this river most celebrity of all is, the honourable mention which the book of Machabees makes of it, where Judas Machabeus's illustrious brother, the high priest Jonathan, is said to accompany king Ptolemy so far as the margin of the Eleutherus ; and we learn from the same book, that it was to the margin of this river likewise, that this great captain pursued the generals of Demetrius, who, in their hasty flight, found the means of reaching the river and likewise of traversing it.

At three leagues distance from this river Eleutherus, and nine or ten from Sayd, and upon the same sea shore with Sidon, we paused before the town of Tyre, a city which was anteriorly so superb, that, as Ezechiel says, her citizens conceived themselves as having come into the world to administer the law to all the human species : so opulent, that in that resplendent city silver and gold were as obvious as dust beneath the footsteps of the citizens, and so magnificent moreover in her edifices, that within her capacious walls all the mansions were so many palaces. So redoubtable through the nations of the universe by her resplendent guard, composed and constituted of the most valiant soldiers of Persia, of Lydia, and of the black-skinned sons of Lybia, that it was considered among strangers as invincible. At the present day I did not expect to find Tyre as magnificent as the prophet represents it ; but I anticipated to discover remaining there at least some brilliant relics of her by-gone splendour. I thought respect would have restrained even the destroyer Time, from annihilating all,

I was deceived in my anticipations ; I beheld, upon the contrary, howling ruin ! To speak with more exactitude, I saw that annihilation of the city which the prophet Ezechiel had announced so many centuries anteriorly. Some heaps of stones, scattered here and there, covered with sand and wild flowers, and worst of all six or seven miserable cabins, which were used as a refuge by some naked Arabs, frightfully destitute of the commonest necessities of life ; these were all I saw.

It was in vain that I sought some vestige of the tomb of Origen, which in the ninth century was said to be subsisting still. Thus hath the Divinity desired to punish the ill use which was made in ancient times by this proud city of her great prosperity, at the same time signalling to all the human kind, how extremely dangerous is fortune if continuous and brilliant.

Some authors do her the honour to attribute to this city the invention of the arts of writing, dying and of navigation. The Hebrews will hardly listen to the first, but as to navigation and the purple dye, we must accord them the honour, (if they were not the inventors) of being the first to give perfection to these arts, and exercise them ; and more especially, navigation which so powerfully contributed to the extension of their commerce, and the riches of the city. Her situation was well suited for such a purpose. She stood, says Ezekiel, in the bosom of the sea, that is to say, she was surrounded by it, and distant from the continent two hundred paces.

This isle was converted, as every one knows, into a peninsula by Alexander, who joined it to the mainland, by the medium of a dyke which he constructed to facilitate the capture of the city.



One of the finest and most ancient monuments, left us by antiquity, may be seen at a distance from Tyre. This is a capacious well, deriving its abundant waters from Mount Libanus, and called the well of Solomon, not that that sovereign certainly constructed it, but that he speaks of it in his canticles, saying, that the lymph in this lacid fountain is supplied by waters that descend with impetuosity from Libanus. I had not a sufficiency of leisure to go and see it, but all the persons who have visited it, describe it as placed in the middle of a tower, forming a great square terrace, which is built of stones of great dimensions, chiseled with such skill and so well cemented, that the edifice appears to be a single stone. This terrace is ascended with facility by a staircase of five and twenty steps, but when you get upon the terrace and look down into the well, which seems to be somewhat like a limekiln, you find that its figure is octangular, and four and twenty paces in circumference. The water of the well is on a level with the margin, and issues so profusely, that a mill is kept continually at work by it at one side, while diffusing fertility as it goes, it spreads into a plain on the other, and ultimately enters certain channels, which conduct it into Tyre. But 'tis time to quit this city, so miserably desolate, whose very name has died. The miserable hovels which replace her ramparts, in this day substituted for the wall of Tyre, are known to its people by the name of Sur. From the peninsula, where this city stood, we proceeded to the port of St. Jean d'Acre, we doubled Cape Blanc, whose name is derived from the whiteness of the stone which composes the promontory. During our passage we saw the celebrated road which is known by the name of the

road of Alexander, 'tis a work which is in every way worthy of the conqueror, it is chiseled in a mountain all of stone, and hollowed like a canal, the sides of which form a little parapet along the side of the sea, whose waves are continually assaulting the foot of the mountain. The length of this road is upwards of a league, and 'tis eight or nine feet in width. It was made by Alexander to give a passage to his army, when marching to the siege of Tyre. After coasting by the road of Alexander and passing by Cape Blanc, we arrived in the harbour of St. Jean d'Acre. Ungrateful for the graces with which God had visited it, this city became criminal by its licentiousness and robberies, by which it was ultimately led into the abyss of idolatry. It was abandoned by the will of heaven to the mercy of the Saracens, who gave up everything within it to fire and the sword. Of the cathedral of Jean d'Acre, nothing now remains but a panel of the wall, and of that of John the Baptist only a few pillars remain standing, sustaining a morsel of the vault where the head of the precursor is seen in bas-relief. The remains of many monasteries are likewise seen, the most respectable of which is that of those generous virgins who, moved by the example of their holy abbess, disfigured the beauty of their faces to preserve the innocence of their souls. The fragments of marble that grate beneath your foot steps, the broken columns scattered round, upon which you tread the palaces of the templars and those of the christian princes, the mansion of the knights of St. John, the magnificent arsenal of the gallies, the other edifices all alike mouldering in ruin, are melancholy marks of the former beauty of this ancient city. In ancient times she bore the name of Pto-

lemais or Aco, from the circumstance that Potlemy and Acon were the founders of the town. It was so extensive that in 1191 there were twenty-seven sovereign princes regally residing in the town, who commanded individually in a separate quarter of St. Jean d'Acre. It was the theatre of the war for several successive years; it was many times besieged, taken and retaken, now by our crusading kings, and now by the infidels of Asia, and this frequent change of masters was the source of its misfortunes. This city's happy situation, its commodious harbour and capacity for commerce at the present, contribute, in some measure, to its re-establishment.—Many merchants have established themselves in this place, who demand missionaries earnestly to propagate the Catholic religion, to maintain the moral purity of the people, and the fervour of Christianity. Following the sea coast from St. Jean d'Acre, we passed in the presence of Castello Pellegrino, and then in that of the city of Tartoura: the first is so called because the pilgrims usually landed there, and found security within it. Tartoura was a powerful city at the time of those pilgrims; it was designated Dor, Dora, or Adora. St. Jerome, in his epitaph on Paula, tells us that this saint had the curiosity to turn aside and visit the remains of this great city, and much admired its ruins. At present it is made use of by the Arabs as a market place for corn, lentils, and peas. The Arab market-men dwell under tents made of rushes and of leaves, covered with a tissue, fabricated from goat's hair, and supported upon poles. Castello Pellegrino and this town of Tartoura have been equally maltreated by the scythe of time, who destroys all the works of man, however stable. Cæsarea of Palestine, which is

at three or four leagues distance from Tartoura, is a sensible demonstration of this assertion ; for its large and sublime columns, half covered with the sand, the relics of its magnificent edifices, its great fosses hollowed to defend the bulwarks of the city, and subsisting with their counterscarp to these times ; these expensive works enable us to see that there is indeed a difference between the present state of this lost city and that which it enjoyed in ancient times. 'Twas indebted for its old magnificence to the vanity of Herod the Ascalonite, as well as to the gratitude of Herod, when Augustus Cæsar presented him with the sceptre of Judea. He thought he could return the benefit in some measure, by conferring the name of his illustrious benefactor on this superb city. It was originally built upon the ruins of the tower of Strato. But that which will render the glory of this city perennial is, that it was one of the first that was illuminated by the light of the faith, in the person of the noble, illustrious, and virtuous centurion, Cornelius. The Acts of the Apostles inform us, that God sent St. Peter to this city to confer the sacrament of baptism on this, the first of the Gentiles that believed. St. Jerome says that here a church was to be seen contemporaneous with St. Jerome, which had been the dwelling of this same Cornelius. This centurion was appointed the successor to Zacheus, first bishop of this city. They were both consecrated by St. Peter the apostle. A panegyric was written by Saint Jerome on four ladies who lived together, in most strict virginity, solely occupied in chanting the eulogies of God in Cæsarea ; and this holy father adds, that in her pilgrimage

to the Holy land, *St. Paula* visited their chambers, which were greatly venerated in the life time of the saint. We may venture to assert, that these four virgins have the honour of having formed the first community of nuns in the Christian world. But infidels, alas ! made themselves masters of this noble city, whence you may judge of its miserable destiny. *Cæsarea* had hardly faded in the distance, when *Jaffa* dawned upon the view. Though anciently called *Joppa*, the Hebrews called this city *Jaffa*, signifying beauty ; and, in serious truth, its situation is enchanting. The relics that remain are situated on the brow of a lofty hill, from whence you discover, on one side, the sea, and on the other hand, a fertile and extensive campaign. *Salladin* effected the ruin of this city, and *St. Louis* re-established it a few years subsequently. It was upon this occasion the holy king performed a certain exceedingly heroic act of charity and mortification. Having learned that the workmen, who were labouring, in pursuance of his orders, in re-establishing the town, had been slaughtered by the infidels, and were lying beneath the canopy of heaven, exposed without sepulture, he hastened, without loss of time, from *St. Jean d'Acre*. He caused the bodies of the dead, all corrupted as they were, to be lifted, in his presence, from the earth. He did more : for in spite of their corruption, in order to give a good example, he burdened his kingly shoulders with a dead body, which his own royal hands laid down in the sepulchre. All the pilgrims to *Jerusalem* arrive at *Jaffa* ; and the situation of this city, though exceedingly agreeable, attracts less the attention of the pilgrims than the distant prospect of the



Holy Land, which is discovered from the port of Jaffa. As soon as we debarked, we fell prostrate on the ground—the pious custom always of the pilgrims. The Christian Franks, the Greeks, and the Armenians of the city visited us immediately, to offer their houses to the pilgrims of their respective countries. I received, on my part, every possible mark of kindness, and of charity from the fathers of the Terra Santa, who maintain an hospital in Jaffa. These fathers observe the rule of St. Francis, and, according to tradition, their house is situated on the site of the residence of Simon, the tanner.—The port of Jaffa is celebrated by the circumstance that the cedars were received there, which Hiram, king of Tyre, sent to Solomon the Wise, for the construction of the Temple of Jerusalem. But it is more recommended by the mystery which was accomplished here, in the person of Jonas, when he was thrown into the ocean and swallowed by a fish. This harbour, which was of great extent in former times, is obstructed so much at present, that large vessels cannot enter the bay. There is a certain street, lying along the sea, beside the port, where they sell rice, coffee, and the soap of Jerusalem and of Rama. Previous to our departure from Jaffa, to resume our journey to Jerusalem, the Turk paid us a compliment. This consisted in peremptorily requiring every pilgrim in our company to pay fifteen piastres. Infidels, in this way, derive profit from the piety of Christians. From Jaffa we advanced to Rama: we traversed a portion of the extensive and beautiful campaigns of Sharon, the loveliness of which the Scripture so highly eulogises, all adorned and bespread throughout with tulips which

grow there of themselves. Their great variety of colour composes a delightful garden. An immensity of water-melons, of extraordinary size, are cultivated here, some of them so heavy as to weigh 10lbs. These are, indubitably, the best in Palestine. Sharon, or Saron, which gives a title to these fields, was anciently a city of considerable beauty, situated on an eminence, from whence it looked over all the country. The plain, which extends from Cæsarea to Gaza, is exceedingly vast and extremely fertile. The natives became converts, and embraced the Christian faith on witnessing the miraculous cure of the paralytic performed at Lydda by St. Peter. Rama, which is four or five leagues from Jaffa, is less a town than a village: the people of the country call it Ramle, which in the Arabic signifies sand, as the city stands on a very sandy soil. It has nothing which could cause us to make honourable mention of it unless that Joseph of Arimathea, who had the imperishable honour of giving a sepulchre to the Saviour of the world, was its citizen. Gregory of Tours informs us, that to recompense this action, even in this world, on the day of his resurrection, our Saviour came to visit Joseph in his chamber, where the Jews imprisoned him, and caused him to see in his side the ensanguined wound! It is at Rama that the pilgrims wait for the permission of the Cadi of Jerusalem, to enter that city without impediment. The fathers of the Holy Land took upon themselves the task of soliciting our permission, as well as conveying it to us, when obtained. You see at a quarter of a league from the city, a magnificent cistern, covered over with a concave roof, and sustained by

twenty-four arcades, which were ornamented in ancient times with pictures, but the ravages of time have we nigh effaced them all. The persons who conduct you thither are accustomed to assert, that this cistern is the work of St. Helena. From Rama you proceed to Lydda, which has gloried in the name of Diospolis, but I have nothing to mention respecting it. From Lydda to Jerusalem, the traveller is necessitated to traverse the very rudest roads, ascending and descending continually, while clambering over rocks of considerable size; but the joy of quickly entering the Holy City, yields unspeakable support and solace to the Pilgrims. They caused me to remark, as we passed by it, a village in which it is said the good thief was born. It is called by the Arabs at the present day, Latroun. The remains of a church are to be seen there, which was dedicated at its origin, to that holy penitent who was predestined for Heaven on the cross. The Christians of the country pretend that the name of this penitent was Dimas, a name which is given him by Cardinal Baronius. From the village which we have just spoken of, we proceeded to another, where a church is dedicated to Jeremiah, and which is known by the prophet's name. We afterwards descended the mountains of Judea, and found ourselves in the valley of Terebinthus, which is at the distance of a league from Jerusalem. In order to reach our journey's end, we were obliged to climb the intervening mountains, which shut out the prospect of Jerusalem. As this city is situated upon the declivity of an opposing hill, it cannot be seen until you are upon the point of entering it, when you suddenly look down upon it from the summit of a neighbouring acclivity. After

continually ascending and descending by the most fatiguing road imaginable, when Jerusalem is revealed to your eyes, to express the sentiments with which the soul is penetrated, at the aspect of this sacred city, is perfectly impossible. At the first and remotest glimpses which we caught of its distant spires, we testified our veneration of the invaluable monuments enclosed within the precincts, by kneeling down like the warlike pilgrims of the middle ages, and returning thanks to the Divinity. It was on the vigil of the sabbath of the Palms that we had the enviable honour of entering the streets of Jerusalem. We immediately proceeded to present our respects to the Fathers of St. Francis, denominated commonly the Fathers of the Holy Land. These Fathers represent the Latin Church in this celebrated city: as they were apprised of the motive of my visit, they informed me that the Holy Sepulchre had been opened very recently, and that advantage should be taken of this circumstance. I totally forgot my past fatigues, and without further loss of time I followed with the Fathers, who volunteered to be my guides. The church of the sepulchre, the most respectable on earth, encloses three churches in its precincts, that of Calvary, first; the Holy Sepulchre, the second; the finding of the Holy Cross is the third; of the three the most magnificent is that of the Sepulchre, or the church of the Resurrection, as they call it. Its enceinte has an oval figure—its interior that of a cross. The church of Calvary is at the entrance of the gate of the Holy Sepulchre, and that of the invention of the Cross is at its right. In the front of the great Church of the Holy Sepulchre, which encloses the two others, a large court may be seen which

is paved with stones in imitation of marble. There is a tower at the end of the church which served as a belfry before now ; it contains three stages ornamented with handsome pillars of snow white-marble. The Turks wished to employ this belfry as a minaret, from the summit of which to announce their ordinary prayers, but Heaven has so severely punished the persons in all instances, who have undertaken this annunciation, that no Turk has the courage to approach it at the present day. It cost individually the sum of six piastres to obtain our admission to the church of the Sepulchre ; this sum once paid, you are suffered to enter or go out at your volition. The first object that presented itself to claim my veneration, was the stone of unction. It is the stone upon which the body of our Saviour was deposited, when, after his crucifixion, Joseph of Arimathea laid down his celestial person, that he might wrap it in a winding sheet. Eight or nine surrounding lamps illuminate this stone, and one is besprinkled with the fleur de lis, being a present from our christian king. From the ground floor of the church and on the right hand at your entrance, I ascended by sixteen degrees or steps to the chapel of the Crucifixion of the Son of God. It is placed upon the Calvary as they call it, that is, upon one of the three churches ; a great square pillar which sustains the vault, separates this chapel into divisions. That which is most distant from the staircase of which I have just spoken, is the place where our Saviour was extended on the cross, and where his hands and feet were pierced, to attach them to his gibbet. The nearest portion to the staircase is the place where the cross was planted, and where he deigned by his death to expiate all our iniqui-



ties. The pavement of this chapel is mosaic: many lamps of gold and silver burn incessantly within it. The place in which the cross was planted, an elevation of two feet, is covered with large stones of undulated marble. The hole in which it sunk is sheathed with silver plate, by the liberality and piety of a Greek priest named Siba, who incurred the expense in 1560. But this venerable orifice that received the cross of Christ, is indebted for its dearest ornament to the blood of the Redeemer, with which the place was deluged, when the Saviour of our souls shed his life-blood for mankind, on the road. At five paces farther on, there stands a marble block, to indicate the place where the Virgin and St. John were situated, when our Saviour from the cross addressed his well-beloved disciple, *Son, behold your mother*, and that deeply afflicted mother, *Behold your son*. In the Revelations of St. Bridget, and in the writings of the Fathers, it is asserted, that in this place it was that when she saw the crucifixion of her Son, that the sacred mother suffered the most cruel of all possible martyrdoms, and that, exhausted by her sufferings, St. Bonaventure says, she fell half dead into the arms of Mary Magdalen. In this martyrdom it was, say the Fathers in addition, that this refuge of all sinners offered the infinite merits of her Son as an atonement to the Eternal for her clients. Having attentively considered every portion of this chapel, I descended by the nineteen steps which I had previously clomb, and re-entered the great church, and following the wall of the choir as I turned to the right, the chapel of the glorious sepulchre met my eyes. This august chapel has a dome, they constructed this dome with joists of cedar :

the number of the latter is 131, and their length 60 palms. As these joists are upright supports, with intervals between them, they constitute arcades. These arcades are open to give the light of the sun admission to the chapel, and to suffer the smoke of the lamps, which burn there day and night, to pass in exhalations through the apertures. Many of these lamps, of which some are very precious, are the gifts of Christian kings. Some were shown me which cost more than 20,000 crowns. The summit of the dome was anteriorly quite open, a species of network was all that was attached to it, to preclude the intrusions of birds; but being repaired in latter times by the bounty of the faithful, a little dome was elevated over the sacred sepulchre, supported by twelve columns, joined two and two, which compose six small arcades. The arcades of the great dome, which we have spoken of above, stand upon a round wall, which was formerly adorned with images of the prophets and of the apostles. These figures were composed of stones, of various colours, arranged, disposed, and shadowed with surprising art. Nothing remains at present but the mere remnants of them. Two galleries are situated under the dome, and one above the other, they encircle the sepulchre. They are vaulted and supported by arcades, which stand upon a score of columns and pilastres, disposed so as to form an interior space, of which the shape is circular. Six-and-twenty feet is the extent of the diameter, and the floor is paved with very handsome marble. The galleries are divided into separate compartments, for the different Christian nations. The divine office is celebrated by those nations, in this church, according to the respective ritual of each. The

sepulchre, where the body of our Saviour was deposited after its detachment from the cross, is in the centre of this space, and under the middle of the dome, and is surrounded by those galleries which we have described to you. This sacred monument, at that time, was nothing but an orifice which had been hollowed in the rock with a chisel and a hammer, but it is covered with white marble now. It is eight or nine feet high; and, perhaps, six in its diameter. The body of the sepulchre is externally adorned with several little arcades, which are standing on their pillars, perfectly proportional in circumference and elevation. A more perfect idea cannot possibly be given you, my Rev. Father, of this sepulchre, than by sending you to France certain of those miniature sepulchres which are manufactured here of mother of pearl, and which convey an idea of the sepulchre of our Saviour with sufficient exactitude.

This object of our veneration is not the only one that claims respect in the church of the sepulchre. It contains four other monuments, which are held in high honour, in like manner. At the distance of a dozen paces from the little chapel of the sepulchre of our Lord, the place has been distinguished by a pavement of white marble, where our Saviour, in the habit of a gardener, revealed himself to Mary Magdalen. The Latins keep an ever-burning lamp there, and the Armenians another. You enter another chapel a little farther on, where the fathers of the Holy Land celebrate the divine office.—According to tradition, this chapel is the place where the house was situated in which the gardener of Joseph of Arimathea resided. It is added, by the same tradition,

that the Blessed Virgin retired to the dwelling of this gardener, to wait in his mansion for the resurrection of her Son, and that this Son, so beloved by his mother, came at the first moment of his resurrection to console her by his first apparition in this place. This chapel has three altars, by which these mysteries are represented, and which are illuminated by many lamps that burn everlastingly. The third is the chapel of the division of the vestments, where it is said that the soldiers shared amongst them the garments of Christ. The fourth and last chapel, which is contained in the church of the sepulchre, is that which is called the chapel of the Improperium. You see under the altar the end of a column, on which our Saviour sat when his head was being crowned with thorns: this fragment consists of a greyish-coloured marble, three palms in circumference, and ten palms high. You can hardly discover in all the rest of the world so many touching objects as may be contemplated in the precincts of these chapels. After having visited them all, I entered the Church of the finding of the Cross, which is one of the churches included in the church of the sepulchre. Its name originated in the circumstance, that the cross was found in this place by the diligence of St. Helena. An altar has been raised there, which is illuminated by a multitude of lamps. In this, as in the other holy places, the Turks permit the Christians to say Mass. They derive so much pecuniary profit from our piety, that they do not take much pains to offer impediments to it. My Reverend Father, I must perforce acknowledge, that I consumed the live-long night in my visits to these monuments, as well as

in meditating on the mysterious events which they memorialize. Never did a night appear so short.

The succeeding day, Palm Sunday, I had the happiness to celebrate the sacrifice of Mass upon the altar of the sepulchre: subsequently to which, I assisted at the benediction and distribution of the palms. The father-guardian of the Holy Land, a Cordelier of the Observance, officiated with the mitre and the cross: a procession succeeded, which three several times encircled the sepulchre. The religious and the laity bore branches of palm, and the most perfect order pervaded their march. Their modest demeanour, and the music that they intoned, the rich and magnificent ornaments of the ministrants, inspire respect and veneration for these sacred ceremonies of the church of Rome. They occupied me all the morning.

When they were concluded, I was conducted into a convent called the convent of our blessed Saviour, by one of the religious. Nothing could possibly be added to the gracious reception with which I was honored by these reverend fathers, invariably anticipating all my wishes before I could express them. They persuaded me to sojourn in Jerusalem for a period much longer than I had originally purposed. On palm Sunday evening, I was apprised of the necessity of embracing an opportunity which offered of making the journey to the Jordan. According to custom, a caravan sets out from Jerusalem for the Jordan, on Holy Monday. In the present instance it consisted of three hundred pilgrims.—We traversed a section of the valley of Jehosaphat, and passed Bethania, where the ruined house of Magdalen



and of Martha may be seen, and where the sepulchre of Lazarus is situated. The pilgrims never omit the opportunity of drinking of the waters of a fountain where our Saviour is said to have reposed with his disciples, when coming from Jericho.

Our caravan arrived at the last named town after a few hours march. Nothing remains at present but the name of Jericho, which was situated in a pleasant plain. An elevated mountain terminates this plain. A cave is situated in its summit, where the forty days and forty nights which our Saviour passed in fasting are said, on the authority of tradition, to have been spent. The path is steep, narrow, and difficult, with precipices at its sides which horrify the beholder. Such was the place selected by our Saviour, in which to fast and pray for the human species. In descending from the cave, we experienced as much difficulty as we had met with when ascending. Having come down to the plain, we found that tents had been erected where sutlers were assembled, who offered coffee, and rice, and similar refreshments to the pilgrims for sale. But food at the time was less requisite than slumber ; however, this repose did not continue very long, as the conductor of the caravan gave the signal for departure a full hour before the dawn, and in order to arrive at the margin of the Jordan at an early hour, we departed instantaneously. Two portable altars were prepared upon the place where our Saviour, it is believed, was baptised by his precursor, and I was one of the persons who enjoyed the consolation of offering the sacrifice of the mass upon those temporary altars.

We saw the Black Sea in the distance which covers the

site, which those infamous cities occupied, which a prodigious deluge of inextinguishable fire anciently reduced to ashes, those fires having burned a basin in that land which formed the site of those devoted cities. The dismal black and smoking cavity was invaded by the waters of the Jordan, which formed a lake of four and twenty leagues in length, and in certain places of three or four in latitude. This sea is called the Lake of Lot, or Bahrei Louth in the language of the country, but 'tis still more commonly denominated the Black Sea or Dead Sea. Its torpid, dull, and stagnant waters are never known to move unless they receive an impulse from the wind. 'Tis folly to seek fish there, for none can subsist in waters so corrupted. It is exceedingly surprising, no sooner have the salutary waters of the Jordan mingled with this fetid brine, than they become so salt, so bitter, and so intolerably stinking, that it is totally impossible to drink them. Stones which issue from this sea and are strewed along the margin, are said to be so hot that they burn those who touch them. All these evil qualities, of which 4,000 years have not deprived these waters, are so many proofs of the indignation of the deity, who desires to testify to all mankind that he punishes at the present day even, the bygone vices of those criminal and reprobate cities.\*

I must not omit some mention of the *trees of Sodom*, as ancient authors term them, which grow upon the Dead Sea shore, at a considerable distance from the mouth of the Jordan. In wood and figure, they resemble fig

\* "The lake Asphaltites or Dead Sea, is the only one which contains nothing living, whether animal or vegetable." *Geography of Maltebrun and Mentelle*, vol. x.

trees, but the foliage and the form of their leaves are much more like the walnut—you might mistake their fruits for those of the lemon, and however inviting in appearance, they turn, it is said, into ashes on the lips. Saint Fulbert, bishop of Chartres, speaks of their existence as a certainty, having seen them, as he says, in a journey to the country. An obvious image, the historian adds, of sensual pleasure, whose fascinating and seducing appearance invariably deceives its votaries. \*

Early in the morning upon holy Wednesday, we turned our back upon this unfortunate spot, that we might repair, with all possible rapidity, to the valley of Jehoshaphat. The caravan halted opposite the garden of olives or of Gethsemani, as it is often called, from a village of that name situated in the neighbourhood. The garden has been purchased by the fathers of the Holy Land, but seven or eight olive trees are all that it contains at present. The place where the petition was proffered by our Saviour, and where his person and the earth were inundated with his blood, is held in the highest veneration. The spot is a cave of considerable depth, in which two altars are erected—priests were singing mass at the moment we arrived, who permitted me to say mine in this venerable grotto. You may conceive the sentiments which necessarily must be inspired by this place of piety, where an agony was suffered by the Son of God for all mankind. We were compelled much more quickly than I could desire to quit its precincts, to assist at the ceremonies of the last days of holy week, in the city of Jerusalem. We arrived in Jerusalem on holy Wednes-

\* The species of these trees is a problem to the naturalists. See Chateaubriand's *Itinerary from Paris to Jerusalem*.—T. A. P.

day, passing through the torrent of Kedron. In our way they directed our attention to a rock where traces of the person of our Saviour were imprinted, when his extreme weakness compelled him to recline upon a stone. "Twas in obedience to the violence of the high-handed soldiery who conducted him that he rose from this rude couch. On arriving at Jerusalem, I retired to pass the night at the convent of the Saviour. On Holy Thursday, the succeeding day, I repaired to the church of the sacred sepulchre, to assist at the ceremonies of the three last days. The service is celebrated on Thursday with such piety and pomp, such splendour, such magnificence and majesty, that the souls of the assistants must be ravished by the spectacle. The altars are adorned with gifts from all the Christian princes, and with the votive offerings of all the faithful which comprise works of extraordinary beauty and exceeding value. The father guardian of Jerusalem, bearing the mitre and the cross, officiated upon every day of holy week. The pilgrims, the friars, and the Catholics received the communion from his hand. The sacrament, attended by a great procession, was carried to the sepulchre, in which it was enclosed until the ensuing day. The Catholic pilgrims invariably observe a fast, on bread and water, during these three days—Good Friday was employed in public prayer, and in various penitential actions. The service was performed with affecting ceremonies very early in the morning. In the afternoon, the laity, with candles in their hands, and with naked feet, and the priests and the religious in their surplices, made the round of all the sacred places to celebrate the stations, in each of these stations a meditation is delivered by one of the religious.

A ceremony is performed by the fathers of the Holy Land, which is very conformable to the genius of the Orientals, who are more easily affected by exterior things than by those that are purely intellectual. They represent the crucifixion with a figure of our Saviour of the ordinary human size. The head, the arms, and the limbs, by means of some machinery, move at their volition. They begin by affixing this figure to the cross, with the hammer and the nails they attach it to the rood; then they slowly elevate it, and the end of the crucifix is dropt into the opening where that of the cross of the Redeemer was really deposited. They sing melancholy hymns on the subject of the passion, and ultimately take it down, when they place the figure on the stone of unction, and to imitate the conduct of the pious Nicodemus, a valuable liquor which they bear in silver vases is poured upon the body, which is enveloped in a winding sheet and placed in the sepulchre. Many persons pass the night in this place and at Calvary, in penitence and in prayer. Holy Saturday, the succeeding day, the father guardian and his friars performed the office, and our sacred mysteries were celebrated with all the solemnity which that sacred day and sacred place demanded. But the edification you derive from the modest manner in which their functions are fulfilled, only equal your affliction at seeing the patriarch, priests and bishops of all the Greeks, perform on their side a pious fraud, to abuse their followers' simplicity. These shepherds, or rather these devouring wolves, to inspire their flock with contemptuous feelings for the catholic religion, assert that the Latins endeavour to discover in a shell (singular enough) some new fire to light their tapers every holy Saturday, while, to give a



public proof of his special predilection for the Greeks. God gives them, they say, a fire from heaven which the patriarch receives descending in his hands. As they hear it from their priests, the people implicitly believe this fable, which is detailed more fully in Father Sicard's letter.\*

I assisted at the office upon Easter Sunday, alike of the morning and the evening. All was splendour and majesty, the very richest tapestries adorn the church, as well as Persian carpets of the finest quality. In brilliancy and multitude, the lights looked like the stars—the altar glitters with the massiest plate of the most magnificent description—a cross that has been given by the kings of France is perfectly beautiful. The kings of Spain have presented many massive lamps which are worthy of that monarchy. The resplendent cloth of gold with which the altar is adorned is more magnificent than any that I ever saw in France. The father guardian celebrated a pontifical high mass upon an altar which was prepared at the door of the sepulchre—he was accompanied by several officers who served him—he administered communion to a multitude of pilgrims who appeared two and two before the table in admirable order—it was some hours afternoon when the ceremonies ceased, those after dinner were prolonged into the night. Having ultimately ended, I returned to the convent of our blessed Saviour, together with the fathers of the Holy Land.—The following day, the first feria of the festival, I prepared to perform, in compliance with the general custom,

\* See a subsequent Epistle.

the pilgrimage to Bethlehem, of which the distance is two leagues from Jerusalem.

'Tis a well sized village, with sufficient population, perched upon a hill of which the situation is exceedingly agreeable. One half of the inhabitants are Catholics, the other half belong to the Mahometan superstition.—Be their religion what it may, they are continually occupied in fabricating crosses, and rosaries, and models of the sacred sepulchre, as well as of that of Notre Dame. These works are manufactured of wood from the *shepherd's field*, or of bones so white as to resemble ivory, and embellished, as they are, with mother of pearl, the sale is exceedingly extensive. The church and the grotto in which Christ was born are situated at the end of the village to the east—you are conducted through a courtyard, encircled with lofty walls, to the church. An antique structure which is called school of St. Jerome, thirty paces long and sixteen wide—whose vault is supported by six or seven marble pillars—is said to be a place where lessons were delivered on the Scriptures by this learned saint. The Armenians make use of it at present as a house of hospitality for pilgrims whose church is beautiful and grand. Fifty lofty columns, each consisting of a single piece of marble, distinguish the choir, and separate the nave that lies within them from the aisles that lie without. The frieze which leans upon the pillars and reigns around the church is merely made of wood, but its carving is elegantly executed—immense windows appear above the frieze which admit a flood of light to the church. All the mysteries of our religion have been painted upon the walls, nothing remains now but some half abraded patches. The elevation

of the choir is three steps above the nave. There is an altar dedicated to the Magian kings, which stands on the spot where, according to tradition, they descended from their camels to do homage to our Saviour. Its length is forty feet, and its breadth may be a dozen—porphyry and marble constitute the steps by which you descend from the choir to the cavern, of which the fine-wrought doors are made of bronze. You take off your shoes, out of respect, when you penetrate this sanctuary—no daylight is admitted—ever burning lamps alone enlighten this recess. The crib is represented by a marble block, raised a foot above the ground, and hollowed by the chisel to the figure of a manger. It is placed upon the spot where the manger of our Saviour<sup>s</sup> was originally placed. The locality which the son of God selected for his birth-place, is an object of respect to the Christians of our times. All things, upon which you cast your eyes, awaken your devotion and fortify your faith in this place—the uninterrupted arrival of caravans of Christians, from all nations that believe, who come hither to adore their Redeemer in his birth—prayers and prostrations in the public streets, and other testimonials of edifying fervour—the value of the presents which the sovereigns of Christendom have sent as a pledge of their religion to the stable;—all the objects which surround you dazzle and affect you, exciting a something in the soul which cannot be expressed. A marble altar, on which mass is celebrated, stands in the centre of this sacred cave. Twice I had the happiness of officiating here. I am not at all surprised that this place was selected by St. Jerome for his residence—no locality on earth can inspire more devotion. His tomb and his

oratory still are to be seen here, as well as those of St. Innocent and St. Eusebius, and those of Sts. Eustochia and Paula. This illustrious Roman lady, an honor to the Gracchi and the Scipios, from whom she was descended, preferred a residence at Bethlehem to a dwelling in imperial Rome, and a hermitage to the sumptuous apartments of the capital.

From Bethlehem we were conducted to the mountains of Judea. In ancient times, a church was erected on the site of the house where the sacred precursor of our Saviour was born. But the infidels defiled it—Louis the 14th, however, marks of whose piety and faith may be found in all parts of the world, withdrew the building from their hands. He had it adorned and established, insomuch that it's the finest church at present in the Levant. The service is performed by the fathers of the Holy Land in a decent and edifying manner. We should not be astonished that the sacred precursor, who did not exhibit much research in his frugal diet, was satisfied with locusts, for in this place their number is infinity. He likewise used, perhaps, the small extremities of trees to which the name of locusts is applied, which the peasants very frequently employ as food. As to what regards the honey which the Scriptures speak of, the wild bee conceals it in the clefts of rocks every where throughout this country. The mountains of Judea which revive the recollection of the sufferings of St. John, preach penance from their summits even at the present day.

We turned our backs on these mountains and the monastery of John, in order to return to Jerusalem. We passed upon our route by the convent of the Georgians,

this is called the convent of the holy cross, for the people of the country piously believe that here it was the Jews felled the memorable tree which they precipitately hewed into a gibbet for our Saviour. The church is very handsome, and its dome much ornamented, but the figures of the saints, which were painted on its walls, are nearly all of them effaced.

Having arrived in Jerusalem, I devoted the first days to visits to the places most deserving of being seen. In the first place I considered the city as a whole. Alas ! it is no longer that metropolis of David, whose lofty gates enclosed the stupendous temple and the gorgeous throne of the wise Solomon, and the crown and glory of the Jewish people. To punish a people overwhelmed with his benefits, to punish them because they were ungrateful, it was heaven's will that all nations should contribute, as it were, in concert to effect the desolation of this city. But as the rights of His justice are never exercised, but that his mercy interposes to exercise her own, he wills that, raised upon the ruins of the first, a new Jerusalem should preserve the precious monuments of the passion of his Son, to shew all mankind, in every revolving age, the excess of his affection for the species, and how indispensably necessary was such a mediator.

These monuments which heaven has preserved with so much care are all that merit attention in Jerusalem. The town is neither beautiful nor large ; you may go round it in an hour at your ease. It formerly embraced Mount Sion, but at present it encloses but a very petty section of it. Every street is dirty, narrow, and badly paved—you are always either mounting or descending in traversing it—the town is without traffic, and conse-



quently very poor. Its revenue is derived from the expenditure of the pilgrims.

The Greeks have many convents and churches in Jerusalem. The patriarch's convent is by far the finest. His church is dedicated to Helena, and to Constantine the Great, a monarch canonised by the Greeks.

The Surians, Armenians, and Copts have likewise a convent and a church. The Jews have their quarter and their synagogue. The Mahometans have many mosques, the finest of which, and the most respected by the Turks, occupies the site on which the temple of Solomon was erected. As no Christian is permitted to penetrate this edifice, I know that its inside is magnificent but from hear-say, that columns of rich marble sustain its gorgeous dome, upon their lofty capitals, that a gallery, which likewise stands on columned capitals, runs round the mosque, and that a world of lamps, pendant from its roof in many a row, illuminate its vast capacity. This is all I know of it.

As to its exterior, I have well considered it. Its form is an octagon, and its dome makes its figure very pleasing to the eye—the walls are invested with mosaic. The pieces are of diverse colours, and ornament the wall with various figures. Arabic characters formed by stones, convey choice sentiments selected from the Koran. The town has seven great gates, six of which are open, the seventh, called the golden gate, is invariably closed. This is the gate by which our Saviour entered Jerusalem triumphantly. The Turks have walled the entrance up, on account of the tradition, that a Christian prince shall one day deprive them of the city and enter this gate with victory. They have effectually provided, they

imagine, against such contingency, by walling up the entrance. The rarest relic of antiquity within it, is Solomon's probatory pool. This pool is exceedingly profound; it is fifty feet in length, and its width is nearly forty; its figure is an oblong square, and it is lined with freestone. At present its waters are dried up, and the probatory pool is useless.

As to the other antiquities of the city, I have little to say upon the subject, I shall name them to you merely; they have retained nothing but the names of what they were anteriorly.

Near the gate of the city that leads you to mount Sion, they shew you the dwelling house of Anne, or rather the spot on which it stood, for it is not possible that her dwelling house, or the houses of which I am now about to speak, should still be in existence. Our attention was directed to an antique olive, to which our Saviour, it is said, was tied. One circumstance relating to this olive tree is true, viz., no one is allowed to cut it.\* A balustrade encircles it, which effectually prevents persons from approaching it. Its trunk is very old, but its branches bear excellent olives, of which the stones make rosaries and chaplets, that Christians buy. You must cross the whole city from the dwelling house of Anne, in order to see the prætorium of Pilate, which forms the seraglio of the Pacha at the present day. The hall was ascended by eight and twenty steps of snow white marble, which have been subsequently sent to Rome, and they are known in that city as the Scala

\* The olive is of unknown durability. The neighbourhood of Athens abounds in olives which are held to be older than the most ancient monuments of that venerable city.—*Tavels by William Rae Wilson.*

Sancta. A vaulted structure stands near the seraglio. The Christians, and even the Mahometans assert, that the flagellation was inflicted on our Saviour in this structure, and that in this place he was crowned with thorns. A Pacha's son sought to convert it to a stable before now, constructing a chamber over head for his servants to repose in, but early the next morning his horses were found dead, as the floor of the apartment suddenly gave way. A little lower down than the dwelling of the Pacha, an ancient arcade is to be found where they say the Son of God was presented by Pilate to the people, in that pitiable condition to which he had reduced him. I could see, distinctly, engraven on a stone, the commencement of the following word, *tolle*.

A road is to be seen at some paces from this arcade, which is designated Dolorous. By this road it was that, while carrying his cross, Jesus Christ was conducted to Mount Calvary. A place is pointed out where a chapel had been situated, which was dedicated to the Virgin Mary, in honour of the spot where his mother, seeing our blessed Saviour sink beneath his cross, succumbed herself to the excess of her affliction. A little farther on, they showed us the dwelling of the leper Lazarus, and to the left they indicate the residence of Dives. At the end of this street, the place was pointed out to us where the Son of God is said to have recommended tears to the daughters of Jerusalem, for themselves and their devoted city, rather than for him. The abode of Veronica is somewhat lower down, and Calvary is very near the gate. It was entitled the Judiciary Gate; in proceeding to the place of punishment, criminals passed it. Our Saviour, the most innocent of all who had ever

trod the earth, passed through that gate, which is walled at the present day. In a different department of the city, our attention was directed to the prison of St. Peter. It was at one time a chapel, but the Turks have restored it to the purpose for which it was originally intended.

We next paid a visit to that Pharisee's abode, in which the heroic act of perfect penance which procured the lady the remission of her sins, was performed by Magdalen. Our Saviour has willed that this act shall be enunciated wheresoever his gospel is announced. St. Anne's church, built, as is said, upon the spot where the dwelling of that saint was anteriorly situate, is very near the dwelling of the Pharisee. Under the reign of the European princes, this church was conjugated to a monastery of females. Our conductors indicated the residence of Zebedee, the father of James and John, as well as the locality of the martyrdom of James, adjacent to Mount Sion. The Armenians have erected a large convent on the spot. The architecture of the church is exceedingly peculiar, but great regularity pervades it. In a chapel of this church, they have marked with mosiac that portion of the floor where that apostle was beheaded.

My Reverend Father, respecting the antiquities in the interior of the town, I have nothing more to tell you ; and as to the antiquities external to the city, time having almost utterly destroyed them, I have little to add to what I communicated previously.

I have often had the happiness of celebrating Mass upon the Blessed Virgin's sepulchre. There rises at the foot of the mountain of the Olives, beyond the bridge that spans the brook of Keydron, a chapel that incloses

this hallowed sepulchre. At the entry of this church, dedicated to our Lady, the visitor descends to a subterranean chapel receiving the day-light at the door by which he treads upon the staircase. This chapel, which is concave in the roof, is sheathed internally with marble. Three or four persons are all it can contain; almost all its extent being occupied by the altar, which stands where the body of the virgin was deposited. The song of the pilgrims, who successively descend there, chanting amid the darkness of the monument, the litany of Mary, (for the lamps that hang within it cannot dissipate its gloom.) Those voices swelling from the sacred profound, the everlasting gloom, and the glitter of those cressets, the reminiscences awakened by the sanctuary, all combine to inspire you with feelings of devotion and respect which cannot be communicated. The superior church has several altars, which appertain to different nations; and in this place they celebrate our mysteries, according to their rituals. The Latins are the best provided for, as the altar of the latter is the sepulchre of Mary. In ascending the stair-case, you meet a little chamber, as well as a little chapel dedicated to St. Joseph, which is said to be the place of the sepulture of the saint. The tomb of Joachim and St. Anne, a little higher up, composes an oratory, where Mass is celebrated.

Between the church of the sepulchre of our Lady and that portal of the city which the Christians call the Blessed Virgin's Gate, your attention is directed to a rock, on a level with the ground where St. Stephen is said to have been stoned. Pausing at this rock, the pil-



grims invariably kiss it, while they utter a few *aves* in honour of St. Stephen.

The mountain of the olives is at that side of Jerusalem that is opposite the rising sun. Of all the elevations that surround the city, the Mountain of Olives is the highest. The scenery from the summit is delightful. Below you lies Jerusalem: a little farther on the Dead Sea is discernible; and, lying like a vein of light, you may see afar a portion of the silver Jordan, and mountains that swell away beyond it, while, on the other hand, Shiloh and Bethania are discovered. Three caverns are found upon your pathway in descending, of great profundity and length, in the form of a street, in which holes have been hollowed of the human length. These caverns are called the sepulchres of the prophets.

The place which our Saviour stood upon, when he taught his apostles the Lord's Prayer, and predicted the destruction of Jerusalem, is held in the highest veneration. He ascended from the summit of this mountain to the skies. Formerly, the faithful built a church upon the spot; but a mosque, which is octangular externally, and circular within, stands at present on its site, as the infidels destroyed it. Marble columns ornament the mosque at each of its angles.

It is in this little mosque that the Turks so carefully conserve the stone which still retains the foot-print of our Saviour: we owe this rather to the avarice, rather than the piety of the Turks, as they obtain money from the pilgrims for admitting them to see it. St. Jerome says, in his time he had the consolation of seeing and doing

honour to the foot-prints of our Lord. But, according to the Christians, the right track was removed, and placed by the Turks in their temple at Jerusalem, where the Turks describe this vestige of our Saviour as the foot-print of Mahomet. Catholics should learn, from the reverence they show it, what honour they should testify for holy things. A little space above this mosque, which encloses such a precious relic, a cavern exists, of which the entrance is only permitted to Mahometans. I have simply seen the door. It is guarded by a Turk, who easily dissolves into civility at the magic of a *baeshis*. This was the grotto that St. Pelagia selected to pass her days, (as she did) 'till her death, in a round of penitential rigour. This frightful habitation, which Pelagia preferred to the pleasures and the palaces of Antioch, inspires a spectator with a spirit of compunction, and reveals to us the riches of the bounty of the Lord, ever ready to receive such sinners as return to him with a spirit as contrite as the canonized Pelagia.

Emerging from this city, by the portal of Damascus, at the west of Jerusalem, you see Jeremiah's tomb; it lies in a grotto, 25 feet broad, and the depth is about the same. The Turks persuade the people that a *santon* of their sect, that is, that some Mahometan fanatic was the tenant of this cave. At some paces from this place, those prodigious caverns, the sepulchres of the kings, attracted my attention. They consist of many chambers, accompanied with galleries: they have cornices, and many other ornaments of architecture. They were hollowed in the rock with the chisel and the mallet. The great indispensable expense, in so prodigious a work, could have never been defrayed by any but by kings.

But nothing filled me with more wonder than the doors of these sepulchres. They that cut them out constructed them of rock ; and the panels and the mouldings with which they decorated them, are quite as exquisitely fashioned as if they were formed of wood ; even the pivots, which they hang on, are formed of the rock. I asked the most intelligent concerning the princes that had made them, and the monarchs they inhumed, but I could not elicit a scintillation on the subject.

As the time for the departure of the caravan approached, I made use of my last moments to see the celebrated monastery of St. Sabas. The fervid affection entertained by this saint for solitude and penance induced him to seek for sequestration at an early age. The most awful deserts were those that he loved best : it was this predilection that induced him to choose the frightful mountain on which his monastery stands for his abode. This mountain is three leagues from Bethlehem, and four from Jerusalem. It is very long, and lined with rocks, which gape in an infinity of places. These apertures had served as cells and oratories to several anchorites before St. Sabas. The torrent of Keydron hurries by the basis of this mountain. The contemplation of this torrent, which revives the recollection of the initials of our Saviour's passion, appeared very proper to this holy hermit to maintain a love of penance in his soul. He was eighteen years of age, when, from a fervid inclination to give himself to God, he quitted his father and his mother, who loved him alone, and undertook a journey to Palestine, at which time he retired into the monastery. With regard to this young man, the purposes of heaven seemed so obvious to the abbot, that

he deemed it advisable to send him to St. Euthimius, who had the gift of guiding novices to that perfection to which heaven has invited them. This saint discerned in the youthful Sabas great capability for advancing in the ways of God. Under this good master he progressed in virtue, which increased in proportion as his love for solitude, and of abstinence and prayer, augmented in his soul. The reputation of his sanctity, in spite of his retirement, became generally diffused, and attracted individuals, from every side, who were anxious to enter on this novel way of life.

The devil was vexed such saintship to behold, and offered him, accordingly, many oppositions. War was waged against him by malignant devotees, they many times attempted to assassinate the saint, but Heaven frustrated their criminal designs.

With all their evil treatment, they could not scare his "tranquillity of mind," never relinquishing the saint in the fire of persecution. Nothing could ever alienate this heaven-descended guest, except the death of St. Euthimius, at which the servant of the Lord seemed afflicted. St. Sabas was appointed St. Euthimius's successor, by the volition of the latter, expressed upon his death bed. For a long time he endeavoured to avoid the elevation, but the solitaries simultaneously prevailed upon him to obey the last behest of his superior. His sanctity of life and the wisdom of his rule, acquired such a reputation for his monastery, that amateurs of the world, relinquishing its illusions, threw themselves in crowds at the feet of the new abbot, to request the holy Sabas to conduct them to the skies; and in spite of the opposition which he offered, he was soon at the head of

two hundred disciples, and as the last who arrived could not find accommodation, they scooped excavations in the bowels of the mountain. Among the number of his disciples, St. Sabas discerned several who were suited for conventual community, who were less calculated to be anchorites than monks. For these individuals he erected a monastery, the direction of which he confided to one Theodore ; he preferred for himself an eremitical existence, and presided over those who were suited to be anchorites. A grotto, in which he could stand upright with difficulty, was his abode, his bed was the rock and his diet was legumes, and yet he attained ninety-four years of age without relaxing in his penance. Stretched upon his bed, when his end approached, he assembled his disciples around him ; he addressed them an exceedingly pathetic advice, to cherish unanimity and harmony amongst them, and communicate alone with the divinity, through the observance of the rules of that solitary life, to which they had been consecrated.

Whilst their abbot thus addressed them in terms full of unction, the callous anchorites surrounding him, were melted into tears, and resounding from their hollow chests, convulsive sobs of sorrow were re-echoed by the cave. Drowned in tears, as they were, at this melancholy farewell, they asked his benediction. His solitary bequest, all he had, was his benison. In bequeathing them his blessing, he said, that through the illimitable ages of eternity, he should testify to Heaven their fidelity to him. He caused the Psalms to be recited, and as the words were uttered, I shall sleep and repose my sorrows in the bosom of the Lord, he yielded up his spirit to the hands of the Saviour.



'Twas thus he expired, crowned with the garland of merits and of years. On learning his death, Justinian the Emperor, who loved this destitute hermit as if he were his son, testified his sorrow by his tears.

The miracles which heaven was pleased to operate after his decease, are so many public proofs, evincing to the world, the pure, peerless, and unsullied sanctity of its servitor, that canonised father of so many anchorites. A fountain bears his name, it is a stream which issued from the rock at his request, and which never since ran dry. We were led to his sepulchre, which is greatly venerated though his body was carried to Venice : a very handsome chapel has been raised on the locality, where there is an ever-burning lamp, which is pendant from the dome.

The monks who live at present in the monastery of Sabas, appertain to the Greek ritual ; their fasts are very rigorous, and day and night, for several successive hours, they intonate the eulogies of God.

Nothing more remained that was worthy of our curiosity in Jerusalem. And now, as the day on which the caravan was destined to depart was the 27th of April, I repaired to our Saviour's sepulchre in the morning, to thank heaven for the favour of having visited these places, whose contemplation fills the soul with such affection for our Lord.

I afterwards bade farewell to the fathers of the Holy Land, when I mingled with the caravan : we took the road by Rama, to embark at Jaffa, where a tribute was a second time exacted by the Turk. We proceeded from Jaffa to St. Jean D'Acre. We were only at the distance of one day's journey from Nazareth ; I should have gone to

Nazareth, even had I been more distant. Nazareth now, as in more ancient times, is merely a miserable hamlet, hence it was, that Nathaniel asked, "Can any good come out of Nazareth;" but since the word was made flesh, this hamlet and its name must be held, amongst all Christians, in eternal veneration. On the 25th of March, the day of the Annunciation, a multitude of pilgrims annually arrive to do honour to the mother of the word incarnate in Nazareth. Saint Louis the Crusader came thither with his court. The sovereign, as soon as he perceived the chapel of the Virgin afar off, alighted from his steed, and proceeded upon foot the remainder of the journey. The princely warrior prepared for the reception of the eucharist, by fasting upon bread and water; he spent days in prayer before these hallowed shrines. This holy chapel where Mary is revered, is built upon the site which that other chapel occupied which was transported to Dalmatia on the 9th of May, 1291, and from Dalmatia to Loretto subsequently. It may be twenty-five feet long and eight or nine in latitude: three altars are erected in the chapel; the altar to the east is dedicated to St. Joseph, the other to the south is dedicated to St. Anne, and the third to the west, to Gabriel the angel.

A cave, which was hollowed in the rock and which communicated with the dwelling of the blessed Virgin, was used by our Lady as an oratory. The Virgin was at prayer, it is generally affirmed, when Gabriel announced the incarnation of the Word; St. Helena placed a pillar where Gabriel saluted her, and another where Mary made reply. These pillars are nearly three feet from one another; the latter has been broken by marauders seeking treasure: the superior part remains and is pendant from

the ceiling. Even the Mahometans consider its suspension as something supernatural. Adjacent to the chapel there is an hospital, maintained by the fathers of the Holy Land, where pilgrims are received with great benevolence and charity. The relics of a church may be seen beyond the chapel, which church was built upon the site of the workshop of St. Joseph.

I never in my life saw a precipice so frightful as the formidable scarp which terminates this mountain; here the Nazarines sought to immolate our Saviour, in revenge for his reproaches of their multiplied disorders.

The impression of a knee is to be seen upon a rock, where the blessed Virgin knelt in a paroxysm of gratitude, to return thanks to God that her Son had been preserved: St. Helena built a church there, no longer in existence. After our orisons at Nazareth, we crossed the country of Galilee to the sea called the Tiberias: the soil of this country, so fertile formerly and full of people, is untilled at present and deserted. They call it the land of the Annunciation, or the country of the Gospel, as it was here that our Saviour first announced his holy law.

Some Jews assert that Sapha was Bethulia, but with very little reason: we passed this city by, which has nothing but the name of one at present; its people are so wretched and so destitute of furniture, as to lie upon the ground; we subsequently crossed the field of Dothan. Jacob's cattle must have thriven here, for its fertility is excessive; in the days of Jacob it was more prolific. In this field we saw the well in which Joseph was imprisoned by his brethren; it has inherited his name. The well is covered with a little dome supported upon four small pillars. In continuing our journey we sought for Caper-

naum, we could scarcely ascertain the site of this unhappy town, razed as it is almost to the earth. Nothing can be seen save broken capitals, fragments of friezes and prostrate columns which appear to have been wrought. They are so many witnesses of the anger of God against this unhappy city, whose towering crimes called down the vengeance of the skies. Her disasters originated in her great prosperity, to which every thing contributed; her situation was felicitous; she stood upon the pleasant margin of the sea of Galilee, and the town extended to the east over a fine declivity; she enjoyed in the utmost affluence all the requisites of life, for on one side the sea afforded fish of every species, and the level country on the other, furnished every delicacy desirable; travellers from strange and distant nations continually alighted at her portals, joyously repairing hither to enjoy the pleasures of this city. But the hearts of the inhabitants became so sensual in consequence of these advantages, that they turned a deaf ear to the wonders and the warnings of the Lord, wonders which would have converted Tyre and Sidon in the zenith of their power. Many times, as I passed by them, I paused to view the waters of the sea of Galilee; I represented to myself the memorable evening of the launching of that happy bark, and that sublime moment when being with his disciples, Christ rebuked the whirlwind, and that too, when the man-God caused the abundant draft at which they were astonished. This sea may be nine leagues long and the breadth is three or four.

The tetrarch Herod built this city in honour of the Emperor Tiberius; the city gave its name to the sea that rolls beside it; it is called by Luke the Lake of

Genesareth, because its waters to the north lave the country of Genesareth. A splendid and extensive city in old times, it is now almost destroyed. Alas, this is the fate of all the works of man ! Here Prince Tancred the Crusader, built a church, as they say, dedicated to St. Peter, to honor the locality where the power to loose and bind was bestowed on that disciple. A bath has been preserved with more sedulity, of which the water is so warm that you cannot keep your hand in it ; 'tis medicinal, and this bath is much frequented and exceeding salutary. In returning from Tiberias to Nazareth, we descended to the valley where the loaves were multiplied ; it lies between two mountains, whence our Saviour could contemplate the thousands whose hunger he appeased with two small fishes and five barley loaves. After a journey of an hour, we reached the mountain of Beatitudes, which rises in a plain having lovely prospects on every side. It was here our Saviour preached that famous sermon which contains such wise and rational morality, that in itself it proves the Deity of Christ. We came about three leagues farther on to the field of the ears of corn, where, oppressed by hunger on the Sabbath-day, the apostles pulled those ears of corn, for which the Jews upbraided them. Half a league from thence we came to that celebrated city where the Son of God performed his first miracle. The church has been converted to a mosque by the Mahometans, which occupies the place where the miracle was wrought. A portico precedes it, of which the frontispiece presents three pitchers in relievo. They show a fountain at some distance, where the pitchers were replenished. The tradition, if not true, at least awakes the memory of the acts of the disciples and of



to return thanks to God for the protection he had granted us during our pilgrimage. I have not spoken here of the Arabs, my Father, the most formidable enemies the pilgrims encounter. The pilgrims encounter the Arabs wherever they proceed, and even in places where you would not deem it possible. They always keep a sharp look out for travellers: it is almost impossible to avoid falling into their hands; and when you do fall in with these marauders, you can never quit their company without being denuded of your property. Their only means of living is the pillaging of pilgrims. We were so happy as not to be attacked. I shall not end this letter without saying a few words of the cavaliers of Jerusalem. The knights are held in this place in profound consideration. The honour of belonging to the order of St. John is only granted to such persons as are distinguished by their birth, or the service they have rendered to the sacred sepulchre, or the alms they have bestowed upon the monuments of Christ. The Rev. Guardian of Jerusalem, in his pontifical habits, ascertains, by interrogatory, the quality of the candidates. Those who have been appointed to obtain this information, report what they have learned. The facts being found legitimate, they take the sword of Godfrey of Bouillon from the sacred sepulchre, and the collar and the spurs of that hero of the Crusades. And first, they put the sword into the hand of the new knight, which is subsequently girded to his side: they put the spurs upon his heels, then the golden collar, with its cross, about his neck. After this ceremony, they recite prayers, which being ended, a formula, containing his engagements, is pro-

nounced by the new cavalier. A discourse is delivered by the father guardian, in which the dignity of a cavalier of Jerusalem is eulogised. He elevates this order above every other institute of chivalry save one, giving the pre-eminence to the golden fleece. He instructs the new knight as to the nature of the obligations which a cavalier contracts on this occasion. He recommends particularly the good example he should set, and the zeal which he should cherish in defending and preserving all the monuments of Christ: finally, the ceremony of the reception of the cavaliers of Jerusalem concludes by a solemn procession around the sacred sepulchre.

I finish the recital of my journey to Jerusalem with this history of the knights. I have nothing more, my Rev. Father, to observe, if it be not to assure, you that though I had participated in no other happiness save the solitary joy of seeing the sacred monuments, those faithful testimonies of all that holy writ has recorded of the death and of the passion of our Saviour. I should owe eternal acts of thanksgiving to the Lord, for vouchsafing to admit me among the number of his missionaries. O! that I could make my voice extend to all our brethren in France, to invite them to come hither to participate along with us in those sacred consolations which are conceded to his workmen by the master of the harvest. Come and see, in former times, wrote St. Jerome to Marcella, to induce her and other ladies to quit Rome and its embarrassments, and to proceed to visit Bethlehem, the humblest of villages. Here you will not see, wrote the solitary saint, here you will not see those sumptuous and superb edifices adorning the first city in

the universe, nor will you see the vast galleries, and magnificent paintings of imperial Rome, nor her porticos, encrusted with invaluable marbles, nor the gorgeous embellishments of palaces, those internal decorations on which silver and gold are lavished to excess. However, you will see the manger of the Saviour, and you will see the humble stable where an infant was adored by shepherds and by kings. Such objects as these seemed sufficient to St. Jerome to win Roman matrons to Bethlehem. How many other motives might be added to those mentioned to excite our beloved brothers to come with us to Aleppo, to Damascus, to Tripoli, to Sidon, to Jerusalem, to the mountains of Lebanon, and to the valley of the Nile. These lands are sacred, every one of them, sanctified as they are by the labours of the incarnate God. Here his first disciples were selected: we tread upon their foot-prints wherever we proceed. In the cities and the villages, where they announced the gospel, do we preach Christ and him crucified. Among the nations who received the faith from the apostles, do we endeavour to maintain the faith. There we labour to defend it, to shield it against that infidelity which endeavours to destroy it.

Opportunity is offered, upon every side, to workmen of good-will, by the ever-teeming harvest. True it is, most true, we must necessarily tread on thorns: but did not the Lord and his disciples tread upon them before? And is it not glorious, meritorious, sublime, to participate in their sufferings?

I require, my Rev. Father, the assistance of your prayers to aid me in thanksgivings to the Lord, for the favour of having called me hither to his service, and to

procure for me the grace of terminating my days in this place evangelically.

With profound respect, my Rev. Father, your very humble and obedient servant,

NERET Jesuit.

TRAITS AND TRADITIONS  
OF THE  
CITY OF DAMASCUS.

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This town has the advantage of having kept the title of the capital of Syria ; though this city has ceased to be that splendid town which was founded by Hus, and beautified by Damas, who was steward or comptroller to Abraham, who gave his patronymic to the celebrated city.

*Cham-Eldemechy* is the name by which it is known among the Arabs. *Cham* is the name which the Arabs give to *Sem*, who was grand-father of *Hus*, who was founder of the city. The meaning of *Demechy* is *imbibing blood* ; a name which is given it because it is situated near the height on which the first murder was committed upon Abel.

Isaiah saw the future ruin of this town, five-and-sixty years before it was destroyed. It should cease to be a city, he asserted, and it should be nothing better than a heap of stones. The prophecy was verified by time, as Damascus was reduced to this condition by Nebuchodo-



nosor, its conqueror. The Macedonians enterprised its re-erection, according to St. Jerome, not indeed upon the same foundations, but a little more remote. They removed the city from its ancient site, because it was commanded by the neighbouring mountains. 'Twas better to build it in the spacious plain, on which Damascus stands at present, near the many chrystal rivers which irrigate the gardens which surround the town.

Charmed with its happy situation, the Ptolemies took pleasure in enriching it; but as many conquerors successively extended the invading arm over the ramparts of this city, the beauty of Damascus became tarnished.

The Romans, in the days of Pompey, were the first assailants of the city. They reduced Damascus to their domination. The Saracens expelled the Romans, suffering in their turn the sieges of our Christian knights. The beleaguering army of the Christian knights had reduced the city to extremity, when a Greek, gained over by the Saracens, played his part so well on presenting himself before the Christian princes, that he persuaded them that it would be impossible to take the town while they directed their efforts to the side on which they at present were besieging it. He could show them, he assured them, that part of the city where the wall was weakest, at which it would be easy, he declared, to enter victoriously,

The Christians credited the Greek, the army speedily decamped; they quitted the side they had hitherto besieged, their forces made a movement from the west to sit down before the oriental battlements. In effecting this manœuvre the besiegers were assailed: a column issued from the city gates which took possession of the

best positions, and altered the direction of the rivers which should have borne water to the Christian camp. The heat of the season was excessive; the thirst which was suffered by the European soldiers was irremediable, it was imperatively necessary to raise the siege.

The Saracens were masters of the city when the siege was raised, but it was only for a time, until Tamerlane reduced them. The Mamelukes of Egypt took it from his followers, and peaceably enjoyed their conquest to 1517. Selim, the sovereign of the Turks, laid siege to Damascus with a mighty army, and expelled the Mamelukes; Damascus has continued, ever since this conquest, to constitute a portion of the Turkish empire. The city was surrounded by a triple wall at one time, the inmost of the three was the highest of the walls; the second was surrounded by a mighty fosse; the third, which was lower than the inmost two, was supported by the counterscarp. There appeared upon these walls at little intervals, towers of different descriptions, some of which were round, while some of them were square: such of them as time has spared have battlements, embrasures, parapets; at present, however, the intervening walls are all destroyed.

The figure of the city is a perfect square, each side of which is half a league in length. Of all the suburbs which it once possessed, it has but a solitary suburb now, said to be about a league in length. The beauty of this city is principally derived from seven rivers, which, if the expression is allowable, are quite at its command, which, glittering in the plain on which the city stands, maintain its perpetual fertility and verdure, so that the fruits and legumes, which the city stands in need of, are supplied

by the gardens that surround the town, and which these streams continually water. The water which emerges from the fountains of the city, is the water of these rivers. Almost every street in this city has a fountain ; the houses of the most inconsiderable citizens have one in which the water emerges from a marble basin, and from this you may judge of the cleanness of the town. *Barradi* is the name of the largest of the rivers, it is one of the ancient *Chrysorrhoeas*, rivers which because their sands were gold, received the name. It passes by a building where caravans put up, supplying water to a vase which stands in the centre of a noble court, the floor of which is paved with variegated marble. This sombre looking edifice is very like a monastery ; there are galleries connected with the second story ; with apartments which follow one another in the fashion of a dormitory ; the doors are adorned with mosaic, and the galleries supported upon marble pillars.

Nothing is so curious in the caravanserai as a certain mosque, which is crowned with a cupola. This mosque which is elegantly built, has lofty columns of the finest marble, which highly ornament the inside : four fine pillars which are under the vestibule are exceedingly remarkable ;—each pillar is composed of a single piece of marble, though each be astonishingly high and large. The river of *Barradi*, after passing by this edifice, washes the walls of the castle of Damascus ; this castle may be considered as a little town, it has streets within its walls, and has houses of its own ; five elevated towers, of which every stone is faceted like a diamond, protect this fortress.

That celebrated steel which made valuable sword blades, was kept in the castle in anterior times. I will not undertake to say that there is any of that metal in existence now, though it be the opinion of many that there is.

As to the houses in the city they are built of wood, having no external beauty ; their prospect is confined to their interior courts ; outside you see nothing but melancholy walls, entirely free from windows ; in proportion, however, to their outward bleakness, are the brilliancy and riches that adorn them within ; they are painted, gilded, and adorned with furniture, and ornamental porcelain, which grouped and arranged with elegance and art, stand upon shelves which encircle the apartments.

Every house has its hall of audience, a divan, as it is termed, in which strangers are received, and where the persons in authority administer the law, and sit in council. Gardens are connected with such houses, but fruit trees are all that they contain.

In Damascus the mosques are the finest edifices, and their number is perhaps two hundred ; the most beautiful of all is, decidedly, the mosque of St. John ; this was an illustrious church at one time, dedicated to St. Zachary, the father of the Baptist : they even say that he was buried here, and a golden basin stands beneath the vault of a grotto in the mosque, and in it according to the Turks his head reposes ; but this head is never shewn by the Mussulmans to any one.

The temple is preceded by a large enclosure, surrounded by a colonnade, in which to make the circuit of the court. The Christians cannot enter ; but such is the beautiful proportion and the perfect symmetry, such harmony and elegance pervade the pile, that when the elevated doors are open, you see all inside of the building

at a glance. The spectator cannot fail to be delighted when he sees the order of the pillars that sustain the vault, the beauty of the capitals that crown the columns, the richly ornamented cornice that reigns along the nave, and the richness of that gilding that gives them so much brilliancy. But our persecuted Catholics, when passing by its portals, cast their eyes along it as they linger at the gate, only to ruminate with tears on the freedom of their fathers, on their piety and liberality, the melancholy changes which time hath brought about, since that vaulted roof re-echoed with the voice of St. John of Darney, whose accents were so different from those of the Mahometans !

After having spoken of this celebrated mosque, I look round me in this capital for something to describe, but see nothing but that road which is mentioned in the Testament, the Latin name of which is *via recta*. It extends from the west to the oriental gate, and it is seen holding on through the city and suburb without the slightest deviation, rectilinearly ; its length is probably a league : to the right and the left along its whole extent, you are never tired of gazing on the gorgeous goods which are here exhibited in shops, and which the caravans of Persia and of India, of Armenia, of Europe, and of Africa, bring yearly to Damascus ; it must be admitted, that the manner of arranging them, inspires an irresistible desire to buy.

Near the oriental gate, at the end of *via recta*, a house is situated, designated that of Juda. St. Paul was received in this dwelling when converted. There is a closet in this house which is four feet long, while the breadth of it is two ; 'twas (according to tradition) in this closet that St. Paul passed three whole days



without taking any sustenance ; it was here that he had that admirable vision, of which he gives a description in his second to Corinthians ;\* and by the imposition of the hands of the holy Ananias, the eyesight of St. Paul was restored in this apartment. There is a mosque at the dwelling-house of Juda, and Ananias it is bruited lies buried underneath it. Ananias, who in Tarsus had been ordered to seek Paul, abode in the great street quite adjacent to a fountain, from which he took some water to baptize the new apostle.

Full of this opinion, the Christians drink this water from feelings of devotion, and keep it in their residence, as if it had been blessed. On the site of the house of Ananias, a temple was erected by their sires : this church, into which I often entered, the Turks sought to turn to a mosque : until it had a minaret it would not suit their purposes, and they often sought to build one, but according to tradition, the erection of the day was overturned every night, and they relinquished their design. In the same street, at the southren side of the oriental gate, there is a species of window which served the disciples of St. Paul to save their master from the Jews, and preserve his precious life.

At this oriental gate, a Christian Abyssinian was keeping guard with his military company. The soldier was apprized of the magistrate's design to seize upon St. Paul and to give him to the Jews. He called a disciple to his side, and he pointed to a window,—'twas a species of embrasure that looked upon the parapet of the highest and the greatest of the ramparts of Damascus. The

\* 2 Cor. 12.

Christians took advantage of this opportune discovery, they let their master down on the outside of the wall, and delivered him to liberty.

The Jews were soon informed of the freedom of the person whom they had considered as already in their hands. Vexed and disappointed, they searched in all directions for the purpose of discovering him. In the chatter of inquiry it speedily transpired, that amongst the Roman soldiers was a Christian keeping guard. There needed nothing more to bring conviction to the Jews that this soldier was connected with the saviours of St. Paul. The soldier was discovered and his death required; and alas! the money of the Jews procured it; they purchased the permission, in like manner, of the governor to have the window walled, that it might be a testimony, as they said, of the infidelity of that false soldier. But in the lapse of time it was doomed to do him honor.

The Christians stole away the soldier's body. They built a tomb above his ashes, which is girded by a balustrade which sustains a little roof which looks down upon the spot, and keeps the pelting of the whirlwinds from visiting it roughly. The Christians, nay! what is exceedingly surprising, the Mussulmans are often seen repairing, with respect, to the precincts of the grave.

We shall go outside of the city if you please, sir; I discover nothing more in the inside of the city with which I might presume to occupy your time.

On the road which conducts to the city of the silent, or the Turkish cemetery, very near Damascus, you discover an erection, said to be the house of the general-in-chief of the army of Benadab, i.e. of Naaman the leper

The house has been converted, by the Turks, into an hospital for such as are afflicted by the same disease. There is a mosque in this establishment which constitutes its wing. The court is overcrowded with waving branches, and the tall and lofty forms of the fig tree and palm. A portrait is preserved here, which is said to be Giezi's, who, when he was disgraced by his master, Eliseus, retired into this city where he afterwards expired. At the distance of two hundred paces from this hospital, run two rivers which the Scriptures speak of; these are the Abana and the Pharphar, and these two rivers give existence to a third, known by the name of the *Siouf* as they branch, a little lower down, into three large rivers, having mills upon their margins. In dyers' work the waters of these rivers are of great utility. They hasten to precipitate themselves into a lake which the Arabs call *Ouadi Guthi*, or *the gulping of the waters*. This lake is at three leagues distance from the city, at the oriental side of Damascus. It is thirty miles in length and eighteen or twenty broad, its fish is very good, and game is quite abundant in the coppice that surrounds it. There's one surprising circumstance connected with this lake, which is, that though it is constantly receiving all the waters of these rivers, yet it never overflows. There are persons who suppose it to have subterraneous channels. I shall tell you what is commonly imagined in the country, and what I perceived myself of this subject on the spot.

At a league, or thereabouts, from our mission of Antoura, there's a river which is known as the River of the Dog. What I heard upon the subject made me form a design to make a journey to the sources of the river of

the Dog. I was standing in the presence of a vaulted rock which had been excavated by the hand of nature, and the water flowed abundantly from underneath the arched way, insomuch, that many fountains, if united in one, scarcely could produce so profluent a supply. To me this arch appeared to be twenty feet in breadth, and nearly fifteen feet in height ; the water which it spaned is the River of the Dog. It is a common supposition that this copious flood of water comes pouring from that reservoir of which I spoke above. But in order to come here, it must have made itself a channel (from its basin to the arch,) which is thirty leagues in length.

The waters which are found in the channel of the Dog, have the qualities of those you discover in the lake, the species of fish which inhabit them are similar, and, like the waters of the Dog are the waters of the lake, gelid and unwholesome, and hard. Near the under-ground canal of which we spoke above, and which issues from the arch of which I have made mention, there are gloomy caverns of great extent, some of which are upwards of eighty feet in length. Nature has produced in the depth of these recesses a column made of chrystal, and many other figures which could scarce be better formed were they chiseled by a sculptor.

The River of the Dog is little better than a league in its greatest length. Two mountains squeeze it upon either side, which rise from out the water like two gigantic walls, and so solid, massive, and impenetrable are they, that they seem a single rock from the summit to the base. 'Tis said that the waters of this river, when they issue from their urn, divide into two branches, and that one of these arms having dipped into the earth, conceals itself

beneath some rocks, and, deep beneath the ground, pursues its course invisibly: that the other is the river of the dog, and separates the Kesroan from the country of the Druses. The ancients knew it by the name of Lycus. It has got its present name from its having had an idol which was worshipped at its mouth, in the figure of a dog.

If tradition may be credited, this dog delivered oracles in so very loud a tone, that the words were heard in Cyprus. Being hurled down by age from its elevated pedestal, the head was separated from the body by the fall. The precipitated body hurried down into the ocean, while the head was brought to Venice, if its legend may be believed. I tell you what I saw, and have mentioned what I heard. The last I think is fiction, but the first is a reality.

The bridge, by which this river is bestridden, leads you to a road which is chiseled in the rock. If you turn to one side as you enter on the bridge, an inscription is perceived upon a granite block, which tells us that the bridge was built by Antoninus.

*Imp. Cæs. M. Antoninus pius felix Augustus, Parth. Max. BRIT. germ. maximus, Pontifex maximus montibus imminentibus Syco flumini cases viam dilatavit per*  
 \* \* \* \* \* *Antoninam suam.* A little lower down what follows may be read upon another table:—*Invicte Imperator P. felix Aug. multis annis impera.*

About six miles from this bridge, you perceive the hill of Abel. Two columns are perceived upon its slope, which rear their upright forms on their pedestals on the hill, and have a species of architrave incumbent on their



capitals. Cain and Abel offered sacrifice to God (if tradition may be credited) in this place, and a little farther on, the impious Cain satisfied his fury on the amiable shepherd.

St. Helena built a Christian church on the spot on which they found his tomb; nothing now remains but three solitary columns, but time, as if repenting him, has left these unimpaired.

On the road to Sidon, at nine miles from Damascus, your attention is directed to the sepulchre of Cain.

On turning your back upon the hill of Abel, to retrace your footsteps to the city, the pathway passes by a lake, the square of which is half a league.

The bed this water lies on, is a whitish stone, of a bitter and a saline taste: from lodging in the winter and the spring upon this stone, the water of the lake contracts its qualities. It thickens in the heat of summer which evaporates its humid particles; the larger portions constitute a white and glistening salt, which, left upon the bed, are easily collected. We have sent you some for curiosity.

Two leagues from this lake, in another direction, and five from the city of Damascus, there's a monastery for Greeks and a nunnery for ladies, whose persuasion is the Greek. They stand upon the mountain *Sajednaja*. The females in the nunnery amount to forty, whose superioress is known to take the title of an abbess. It will not be considered as astonishing in France, that the abbess is superior to the two establishments—that males and females equally obey her.

The monks chant the office in the choir, and administer the rites of religion to the nuns, while the serving-brothers

of the former manage the affairs of both the houses.

The nunnery is rich, 'tis incumbent on the inmates to offer hospitality to all the persons who pass by, and it is an obligation religiously complied with.

Fervently devoted to the virgin Mary, the nuns are visited on lady's days by pilgrims who gather to the nunnery from all directions. Maimbourg, I remember, has made mention of a miracle,\* to which this devotedness is said to owe its origin. The church contained a picture of the virgin Mary, from which, its colours fading, it became in the eyes of the credulous assistants, really invested with a true carnation. The renown of such a miracle persuaded me to visit it. They shewed me a shrine which was hidden in a corner, protected by a multitude of iron bars, from which you see, the shrine was sufficiently secure. I stood before this cage, while the Cicerone informed me that this shrine contained the picture that contained the true carnation. I saw the iron bars and some glimpses of the shrine, but returned to Damascus nothing wiser than I came.

The chapel is adorned with the presents of the faithful, and is bright with many a row of starry lamps that corruscate with precious stones of every colour.

You survey from the summit of the Sajednaja, (the mountain whereupon the said monastery stands) the extent of the plain of the beautiful Damascus, which is stretched at the foot of the Sajednaja. You may see Barsy below you at the beginning of the plain, a village which was anciently denominated Noba. 'Twas thither that Abraham pursued the kings who ran away with Lot, and with his property.

\* History of the Crusades.

Near that village you behold a cave; the smoke of the sacrifice ascended there which Abraham offered to the God of victories, when he rescued his nephew from the kings.

Yauber, there beyond, another village, may be half a league from Barsy. Certain Jews maintain a synagogue in Yauber. Sojourning in the village, I asked one of them, one day, "Can you tell me," said I, "when your synagogue was built?" "A cave was discovered by an ancient of our nation," the Hebrew made answer, "where Elias the prophet had abode; the synagogue was built on the summit of the cave, and thither they conveyed the volumes of the law which escaped the spoliations of the ravagers of Rome, what time Titus brought the Temple to the ground." One circumstance is true, be this story as it may, and that is, that there is a synagogue in Yauber. There are three little chapels at its oriental side, and 'tis in the middle-most of these that the Pentateuch is kept, together with some other writings which are written by the hand, in Hebrew characters.

The form of these books is very different from ours. Suppose a sheet of parchment, with another at its end, and another joined to that, and so on to the length that the text requires: rolled on one another, they compose a volume which resembles a cylinder in shape. A coffer, that is composed of a very precious wood, encloses the scroll, on which the Pentateuch is written, which is enveloped in a web of a valuable kind.

The cave in which Elias dwelt is situated in the chapel to the right. The figure of that cave is square: two stone steps bring you down into the cave. It is constantly illuminated by a quantity of lamps, which burn there in honour of this celebrated prophet.

The Jews call this cavern the grotto of Elias ; for, according to tradition, it was here that Elias, in compliance with the order of the Lord, consecrated a successor to the king of Syria, in the person of Hazael : and, according to the same tradition, it was here he was obliged to hide himself to escape the vindictive fury of the king by whose anger the gifted fugitive was followed.

The villages of which I have spoken to you now, are extern to the city on its orient side, but those which are blazoned by the setting sun, and the villages which bask in his meridian rays, lying to the southward of Damascus, equally deserve our attention. Descending from the Sajednaja, we shall climb the Sallie, to which it is united, and which lies to the southward of the city. The village in the valley has the mountain's name. A cave is situated in the mountain's side, of which the orifice is fenced with rocks, which were said to be so many jasper stones. Forty Greeks, who took refuge in this cave, were at one time massacred within it, having been accused of speaking of Mahomet in a slighting tone.

At two hundred paces from its mouth, on the side of the same Sallie, a cave is discovered which is higher up, which Christians are not suffered to go near. The Turks tell a story with reference to this, to the following effect. The prospect appeared so delicious to Mahomet, pausing on the summit of Sallie, and considering the city of Damascus, as it lay in its loveliness below him, that he internally determined, upon this account alone, to abstain from going into it, and, in order to quit it as quickly as he could, he made one gigantic step, which brought him, in the turn of an eye, into the city of Medina, in which he ultimately died.

However improbable the story be, the Turks have the greatest veneration for a mountain which was pressed by their prophet's feet, and thither pilgrims perennially arrive, who reverence the ground on which Mahomet trod. A pavilion has been placed on the summit of the Sajednaja, circular in shape, with apertures, or doors, to consider the four quarters of the world, as it were. The prospect is perfectly enchanting. A Turkish lord was accustomed to ascend to the summit of the Sajednaja, to contemplate the prospect every day: and now in compliance with his will, the tombstone, under which his ashes lie, rears its head upon the sublime height. To the west of the pavilion you perceive a plain, to which the declivity is gentle; 'tis known by the name of *the field of victory*. It got this appellation in the holy war: and a story in reference to this is related by an Arab author. As discord was existing in the Christian councils, a soldier, more sagacious than the others, devised a project to convince the chiefs that the discord which they cherished would delay the siege. Taking a quiver from an archer's back, he lifted up the arrows in his war-glove; the mail-clad warrior, putting up his beaver, directed their attention to the shafts;—collectively, 'twas difficult to break the bolts; one by one, nothing was more easy. "Princes! the enemy," he cried aloud, as he flung far away the broken fragments, "warriors, the enemy will treat us thus, taking us singly and unassisting, but if discord be driven from our councils, close bound together by the ligatures of union, warriors of the cross, we shall be invincible." This address, says the Arabian writer, enforced as it was by an illustration, reconciled the repellent spirits, and the town was taken.



The field on which the warrior stood, when he harangued the Christian leaders, on that account was called the field of victory, continues the Arabian.

Though friendly to the Christian army, the Moslem cannot be believed when he gives the lie to our historians, who tell us that the siege was raised, and that a spy prevailed upon the Christian chiefs to change the attack, and soforth.

That the Christian knights, who sat down before Damascus, failed in their efforts to reduce the town, is a circumstance confirmed by the Sire de Joinville, and Father Maimbourg.

According to this Sire de Joinville, adjacent to the field of victory, a Dominican, named Father Yves, encountered a woman, who was hastening along, having fire in her right hand, and water in her left. "Prythee, my good woman," said the venerable priest, "whither are you going with your fire and water?" "I am going," said the woman, "to extinguish hell as well as to set fire to heaven, that God may be served for love alone, henceforth by the family of man.

When this story was reported to the king, that grave monarch is said to have considered it an edifying lesson.

In speaking of the field of victory, the tower, which rears its head on that enormous rock, is too conspicuous to be forgotten; its title is the *Tower of the Reconciliation*, for here the chiefs of the Christian hosts pitched their tents and attacked the town when concord had returned.

The precincts of this tower resemble paradise; there the six rivers may be seen, glistening amid the foliage: the fresh and fragrant air that comes from the gardens of

Damascus, and that crisps the rivers that surround it, is perfectly ambrosial. These chanel's have been hollowed by the hand of man, in order to irrigate the plain. The plain is terminated by delicious landscapes. The place is much frequented by the Damascenes, who come hither to sit down beside the tower to luxuriate beneath the waving boughs, in the paradise that spreads around them.

The plain on which the city stands, is more extensive to the west than at the eastern aspect of the city : the portion of the plain which is westward of the city, may be twenty leagues in length and six or seven wide ; *Ouadi leh a jans* is the name by which it is known, and this signifies the plain of Persia ; it is surrounded to the north by three great mountains, the highest of these hills is the mountain of the Sheik. Confronting the north-east on one side and facing the south-west on the other, it is ten leagues long in this direction, and completely terminates only at Cesarea Philippi : this celebrated city is at present but a village, nothing but its solitary castle now remains of all its ancient greatness, which lifts its melancholy head in dismal desolation, over some dilapidated houses.

There is a gentle elevation of the earth in the neighbourhood of Cesarea ; it is little more than ten feet high and may be half a league in circuit ; it is overshadowed by umbrageous oaks, and scattered here and there : citrons, sycamores, and orange trees, rear their forms on this gentle slope. According to a popular tradition, our Lord was standing on this gentle slope when he questioned his disciples as to what the people said of him, and as to

what they said of him themselves, when Peter took occasion to reply, *You are Christ, &c.*

It is from the foot of this gentle elevation, that two fountains issue which are designated Sor and Dan; about thirty paces separate these sources, and at about fifty paces from the place at which they issue from the earth, they form a confluence which constitutes the river Jordan, a river that has had the honour of lending its waters to the great precursor, upon his aspersion of the head of the Messiah. Christians very often drink the waters of the Jordan as a remedy in sickness, not that they suppose its qualities are medicinal, but rather confiding in Heaven for a cure. We learn from the sacred writings, that on orders being issued by the Jewish leader, twelve large stones were lifted from the Jordan to be piled into a monument, to serve as a token to posterior times, to tell them how the Lord had made the waters halt, and had arrested the river, and given them a causeway for the Ark of the Alliance, and for the warlike and embattled hosts that followed it.

A story is related of that mountain of the Shiek, which I incidently alluded to above, and the narrators from whom I heard the tale, told me that they had it on the best authority, having heard it from their fathers, who had heard it from their grandfathers, and so on up to the fountain-head.

From the mountain of the Sheik, a river issued in anterior times, which was perfectly invisible. It was called by the Persians the Aboulouaire, in whose country the river rolled in light, though its course was hidden, concealed and completely subterraneous, from the mountain of its source, to the land of Iran, where, emerging

from the dismal darkness of its frightful caverns, its waters seemed to roll in waves of gold in the splendour of the Persian sun : but the existence of this river was totally unknown to all who inhabited the mountain of the Sheik and the intervening regions, under which it meandered.

Diurnally a shepherd drove his flock to graze upon the side of the mountain of the Sheik ; he always was obliged to bring some water with him in order to quench his casual thirst, as none was to be found upon the mountain side, nor anywhere indeed, in its vicinity. This shepherd was sitting on a rock one day, when his dog, who had been absent for a length of time, issued very suddenly from underneath the rock, and going to a little distance, shook water from its dripping hide, with which it was completely saturated, and from which the unconscious looking animal had just emerged, judging from appearances.

Surprised to see the creature dripping wet, he flew to the spot from which the animal emerged, but the shepherd sought in vain for orifice or aperture ; nothing could be seen but close-bound rocks, without the slightest fissure in the stony belt which they formed, on the mountain's side. He climbed the mountain the succeeding day, his sheep were scattered in the same directions, his dog had hurried from the shepherd's foot, and was busily engaged in smelling at the rocks, he saw him disappear beneath a giant block, where burning, with the fever of excited curiosity, the shepherd in an agony awaited his return.

He returned very speedily, dripping from saturity, and first having shook himself repeatedly and furiously,

he performed some half antics and then shook himself again, and when the moisture of his hide was sufficiently removed, and all danger was dispelled of his dogship getting cold, he leaped, gamboled, bounded, and shouted out his exstasy, as if he had performed some astonishing achievement, for which he thought his master should reciprocate his joy. The master could no longer hesitate believing that water lay concealed beneath the stones; but in order to discover it he must begin by removing the rocks under which it lay concealed.

He returned the next day with all the instruments necessary, for such an enterprise: the dog led the way, as he was wont to do, and then disappeared beneath the rocks, and shewed where the shepherd should begin his toils.

With many heavy blows of his pickaxe he endeavoured to effect the initials of an opening; as soon as it was made and that the shell fell in, he perceived a concavity under which he glided, and with a palpitating heart and a corruscating eye, and with his canine companion for a solitary guide, he entered on these singular adventures.

He had not gone very far into the bowels of the earth, when he heard delightedly, hollow reverberations of a waterfall; he took courage at the sound; but he found it very hard to exercise his pickaxe, it being necessary now to stoop his figure and to proceed into the earth all-fours.

In spite of the many difficulties by which he was impeded, our adventurer continued to advance, breaking with reiterated blows the rocky obstructions of his narrow way, till he found himself, in fine, in a second cave, from whence he perceived an immensity of water which



issued with the utmost affluence, and was being rapidly precipitated by two different canals.

Delighted and surprised at this discovery, the shepherd, as he stood beside the streams, felt suddenly inspired to stop up one of them : he complied with this involuntary inclination, and it will ultimately be seen that the shepherd acted wisely, for it very often happens that *first* thoughts are best, the difficulty being to know when they are so. The shepherd was so cautious as to shut the aperture by which he penetrated to the two canals, in order that no one else might share the secret.

Having ascertained this hidden treasure, he elatedly retired when this was done. He frequently returned to the same declivity ; the herbage growing upon the slope was fine and odoriferous, to which his flock was partial, and upon the hill side there our shepherd never wanted water.

A year had passed away, when one fine day three Persian lords were seen arriving, and entering on the plain, and riding for Damascus. These cavaliers were seen to rein their horses and enquire from underneath their black mustachios, of every soul that passed them by, where was the source of the Aboulouaire ; they knew, they continued, from traditions of their land, that it must be somewhere in the “ plain of Persia ;” they added, that lately, to their great surprise, the bed of the river was run dry in Persia. “ We have been deputed to ascertain the cause, and hence have we visited your country,” continued these illustrious horsemen ; “ we have been entrusted with treasures for the recompense of him who can communicate the knowledge we require.” The news of their arrival and the motive of their journey,

together with the rumour of the recompense, reached the shepherd's ears. All he heard upon the subject inspired him with the notion that the underground canal, whose waters he had damed, was really the fountain of the river of the Persians. Full of this opinion, he sought the Persian envoys. "If you are right in your conjecture, that the fountain of the river is anywhere at all circumjacent to the plain, I shall undertake to find it," said the shepherd to the Persians.

The envoys were delighted at the hopes that he held out, and on their side the noblemen renewed the promise of regally rewarding him, in case he were successful. When he saw them preparing to assist him in the search, the shepherd brought the Persians to a pause, by telling them that time would be necessary, in order to discover it; that as envoys they had nothing in the world more to do than to return to their country, and he would send them word, according as his efforts were successful or unfortunate.

This answer did not satisfy the Persian envoys, whose purpose was repeated, of pursuing in his company, the researches which the shepherd should commence, a purpose which he met with a multitude of difficulties. Weary with their absence from their native country, and meeting nobody that made them such an offer as the shepherd, the Persians thought it better in the end to bargain with this shepherd as to what he should require, than to continue in their exile, expecting an event which was very far from certain. Meanwhile, to prevail upon the shepherd to be prompt in his researches, they gave him an earnest of his recompense, and turning their

backs upon Damascus, set out on their return to their native land.

The moment that the shepherd saw their forms fade away on the far horizon of that spacious plain upon which the city of Damascus stands, this shepherd hurried to destroy the dam. The wave shot foaming down the hollow channel quite as rapid and abundant as before. As they were now re-established in their first condition, the shepherd often visited the two canals to discover if their currency continued undiminished. As the waters fled along their gloomy bed as full as if they would flow for ever, he waited with impatience for a messenger from Persia.

The envoys, half disheartened as they went upon their way, were not so expeditious as the waters, which, never pausing night or day, brought joy and acclamation into Persia long before the wearied horsemen had accomplished half their journey. Jaded as they were, they seemed to get new life, on arriving in their native land, when informed that the river was running in its bed. They were overwhelmed with congratulation, and were led along the banks of the Aboulouarie in something like a Roman triumph.

As every one was asking why the river had run dry, the envoys recounted what had happened them; they described the gratitude they felt for the shepherd, and the recompense they promised him. They speedily sent back the promised gold, and the money was delivered to the shepherd.

Many, many years elapsed, and the headlong flood of the Aboulouarie was fully as affluent as before, when it was suddenly perceived that the water was diminishing;

they were still more astonished when it ceased to run, and the parched bed of the Aboulouaire, denuded of a single drop of moisture, became scorched and burned by the summer sun. The waters would return when the season changed, they hoped, but when the winter came the Aboulouaire was dry, so they determined upon doing what they did before. Their messengers received the same instructions which had been given to the first ambassadors.

Furnished, as they were, with these instructions, they went right to the village of the plain where the shepherd had abode. They were very much surprised to learn, on arriving, that the shepherd whom they sought was long since dead.

They were wholly at a loss ! when it dawned upon their minds that the shepherd might have sons who would render them the service which their nation had received from the parent before.

The father falling sick, and not hoping to recover, called his eldest son beside him. "Before I leave the world," said the father to the son, "I shall leave you a token of paternal love ; my son, it is a secret which no one else shall know."

He related every circumstance connected with the river ; he besought the son with fervency to keep the secret, and he and his posterity should never want for gold. A little after this the father died, and the son, solicitous to see the marvels, lost no time in repairing to the place. He found everything exactly as the father had described it—the rapid current and the two canals, and the dark and dismal cavern through which it was forever foaming.

To enjoy the good fortune which his father promised him, with as little loss of time as well might be, the stripling, with rapidity, built up the dam. He expected that the river would run dry in Persia, that they would send a deputation as they did before, which he expected would produce him a valuable present. The event corresponded with these expectations. The Persians repaired to the children of the shepherd. Of these the eldest appeared in the presence of the envoys. Having ascertained their will, he promised to exert himself to do as much for them as his father did before him, while the Persians, upon their side, promised to reward him still more handsomely. The messengers requested, (when the bargain was concluded,) that the shepherd would shew them the Aboulouaire. Wishing to conform to his father's will, the stripling was exceedingly unwilling to comply ; he met the proposition with innumerable difficulties. They followed up their purpose with eagerness and energy ; he parried all their queries for a length of time, successfully, but they played their part so well, and gave him so much money, which was nothing but an earnest of his recompense they told him, that his determination thawed in the glitter of their gold. He foolishly consented to conduct them to the place to which they were so anxiously solicitous of going. They saw the waters issue with unspeakable delight ; but while they were surveying the two grand canals, they were astonished at discovering that one of them was dammed. The barrier was broken at the messengers' commands. The moment it was open, it was entered by the wave and the canal was overflowing in the twinkling of an eye.

The Persians very easily perceived the fraud. They



did not entertain the slightest doubt but their river had been dried by the damming of the fountain.

The only object then was to obtain security that it never should be done a second time. But they were not content to have the shepherds' word: they took the utmost care to publish to the world, where the sources of the river were discovered, that no one, henceforth, be he who he might, should dam the fountain in the summit of the Sheik, or dessicate the river in the vales of Persia.

Such is the story that is related here, and considered as authentic in every particular, and hence it is, that a portion of the plain, on which the city stands, is known to the natives as the plain of Persia. As to what concerns the Aboulouaire, we learn from intelligent and curious travellers, that a lake, existing in this plain of Persia, is probably the source of the Aboulouaire; that it enters the canal and passes into Persia, and finds an outlet in the Persian Gulf: that as to the waters of the other arm, they pass into the river of the Dog, to mingle with the Mediterranean eventually. Truly, the prophet had reason to exclaim, that *in His distribution of the waters that irrigate the earth, the Deity is admirable.*

Before we emerge from the meadow of Damascus, we must not omit that, descending from the Sheik, you meet, upon your road, near the village of Beitima, a tomb, about thirty feet in length, considered by the people as the tomb of Nimrod. This tomb has the antique structure of the ancient Oriental sepulchres. The tombs, which are said to be of Seth and Noah, which I have encountered in the plains of Balbec, and which are certainly of great antiquity, are, in every way, similar in structure.

According to the popular account, the tomb of this unhappy and ambitious prince is never watered by the dews of heaven, even though the land is saturated which encircles it. The unhallowed tomb, of Nestorius, the heresiarch, who endeavoured to deprive our blessed lady of her quality of mother of the Deity, is also said to be unvisited by the falling dew. Having given an account of all that seems most singular in the city and the circumjacent plain, I should add, to the glory of our Saviour's grace, and to the correspondence of St. Paul, some account of whatever I considered with respectful eyes, in the place where the illustrious apostle was converted.

The old road runs between two mountains: one of these mountains may be distant from the other perhaps a hundred feet. The mountain which is nearest to the old highway, is known by the name of *Kaucac*, which signifies *celestial light*,—an appellation derived from that resplendent light which so suddenly enveloped the apostle of the Gentiles. The other, which is circular in its circumference, is called *Mediouar el Kaubab*, the translation of which is *the luminous circle*. A dilapidated monastery lifts its melancholy form in the middle of this mountain, of which a chamber under ground is the only portion that continues perfect.

It was between these two mountains that the man, predestined by the Lord to carry the flambeau of the faith to remote and foreign nations, was going on his journey, “and suddenly a light from heaven shined round about him, and falling on the ground, he heard a voice, saying, &c.

Recovered from his stupefaction, with the words of the Lord still ringing in his ears, in tones of thunder, he retired to the cave or chamber under ground, of which

I have already spoken : thence he proceeded to Damascus, in order to comply with the orders of the Lord. Having issued from the city, some time after, (if tradition may be credited,) the apostle took refuge in the same cave, the better to escape the fury of the Jews.

Many of our missionaries have gone into the grotto, by whom I am informed, that you cannot look upon its rugged sides without feeling more or less the *genius loci*.

The apostle, in proceeding to Damascus, passed through the villages of Dadaida, Jahnaia, and Cherafre. These villages are now inhabited by Turks, who cultivate the plain, and render it productive in cotton, corn, mulberries and barley, and in all sorts of legumes. Two great mountains terminate the plain ; one of which is called *Chafumehary*, and the other, which is higher, is denominated *Manaa*. South-westward of Damascus, and beyond the mountain, from the summit of the latter, you perceive the plain of Hauran. This plain is the country of Abraham. The towns which were anciently situated here are now-a-days in ruin ; such is the fertility of this expanse, that it is called the granary of Turkey. Caravans arrive, almost diurnally, from every province of the empire, occupied for ever in exporting corn ; of the meal, which is most excellent, loaves are made, which are two feet long, and are half a foot in thickness. They will last for a year without corruption. They dip it in water when the bread is stale, and find it then as palatable as if it were new-baked. Whether poor or rich, they prefer it to all other bread.

In concluding this account, I cannot quote a higher eulogy than that which the prophets have passed upon Damascus. They call it *the abode of pleasure*, and its precincts are entitled places of delight.

## TO FATHER FLEURIAU, S. J.

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Naxos, 20th March, 1701.

MY REV. FATHER,

I deem it my duty, in compliance with your wishes, to acquaint you with the blessings bestowed by heaven on our missions to the Grecian islands. Siphanto, Serpha, Thermia, and Andros, are the islands traversed by us last year. Help us to express our gratitude to God for the good he has done by the medium of our missions.

The island of Siphanto is fifteen leagues in circuit. The country is fine, and the climate is benignant. You meet many lucid fountains there, whose waters are like chrystal, as well as multitudes of olives, which make admirable oil; corn, fruits, wine, cotton, capers, and legumes are exceedingly abundant. Fruit trees, of the species of the orange and the lemon, would exist in more abundance if more sedulously cared. The revenue of this island was, at one time, considerable. They shew subterraneous excavations at the present day, from which, in ancient times, they say, that gold and silver were

extracted, and traces of furnaces are found in fact, where they purified these metals as they drew them from the mine. The French consul, M. Guyon, says, that during the last war, an able chemist, a Venetian, put the matter to the test—from 80lbs. of ore he took 18lbs. of silver.

The people of Siphanto are affable, laborious, and humane: they speak a dulcid Greek, a little less alloyed than the language of the adjacent islanders. A large village, surrounded by a wall, which they designate a castle, together with eight hamlets, which contain six thousand souls, compose all their habitations. Cotton web and pottery make all the materials of their commerce. The Greek bishop has his dwelling at Siphanto. His diocese embraces eight islands in addition, Serfo, Myconi, Amorgo, Nio, Stampalia, Naphi, Sichino, and Policandro.

This prelate, who is forty years of age, is a man of much intelligence, and speaks his language with elegance. There are forty-five parochial churches in the isle, and each church is attended by its particular Papa. Exclusive of these five-and-forty parishes, a number of chapels may be seen here and there in the campaign and on the hills. They are neat in their exterior, and present a pleasing aspect at a distance. At the feasts of the saints to whom they are dedicated, they celebrate the sacrifice of Mass, and multitudes assemble to the ceremony. In this island there exist three monasteries for females, and two for men; the most considerable of these is in the centre of the isle. This convent is well built, and its church, dedicated to our lady, is a very pretty edifice. Its inhabitants consist of twelve Caloyers, and five secular priests. The second monastery has four Greek



monks : it is dedicated to Elias, and stands upon the summit of a very lofty mountain. The third has been abandoned, having now-a-days no revenue. In Greece, the bishops are selected from the regulars, and should a secular be chosen, he must first assume the habit, and profess himself a monk, in some monastery or other. The nunneries are likewise in the open country. There are thirty-six nuns in one, and about twenty in the other, who are all in advanced years, and subsist upon their labour. They are virtuous and pious, and would probably be more so, if the people from without had not liberty to enter whenever it seems good to them. Though these nunneries have no cloister, no one ever heard it said, that they receive the slightest insult. Infidels consider the habitations of the sex as a species of sanctuaries : it would be a crime amongst the Turks to do any thing within them offensive to good manners. The Latin ritual has fallen at Siphanto. There are only two small churches in which it is observed, of which one is in the castle, and dedicated to St. Anthony, and attended by a vicar, who relieves the Latin bishop of Milo. The other, in the country, is devoted to the virgin. Six families constitute the Latin congregation, and even these families are foreigners. It was not so formerly. The Latin ritual flourished in Siphanto before now. The Gozadini, who commanded in the country, were of the Latin rite; but, since the invasion of the Turks, their descendants, like those of other families, degenerated gradually, and now-a-days are Greeks. We landed in Siphanto on July the 24th; Father Luchon and myself, and M. Desland, who had been appointed to perform operations in chirurgy, in which he is so skilful. Our first occupa-

tion was to visit the Greek bishop, to ask his permission, in order to exercise our ministry. He received us very coldly at our entrance, but no one could be kinder in the end. Before our departure from the capital of Turkey, my Lord, the archbishop of Spiga, the patriarchal vicar for the holy Roman See, throughout all the patriarchate of Constantinople, had had the kindness to provide us with an honourable patent, the most ample in its nature we could possibly desire, by which all the powers of his lordship were conceded to us. His majesty's ambassador in Turkey, M. Feriol, expedited us another for the safety of our persons. This honourable minister, alike zealous for the honour of religion, and for that of the French name, declared to all, whether infidels or Christians, that the protection of his majesty was over us, and that we should not only be allowed to come and go wherever it seemed good to us, but that they should do us such good offices as our occasions should require. The principal village was the place in which we first began our mission. We took care, before hand, to purchase whatever we stood in need of, for fear we should be burthensome to any one. These poor people, to whom they sell the most gratuitous functions of religion, were exceedingly delighted at our disinterestedness, convinced, in consequence, that the only object that we had in view was simply to direct them to the path-way of salvation. They could not restrain themselves from exhibiting their gratitude. The sermons, which we preached to great crowds of people who assembled every day, from all quarters of the island—the lessons in religion we imparted to the children, and our regulated visitations to the sick—the gratuitous administer-

ings of remedies, during upwards of three weeks, were our only occupations. Our sermons were attended by the bishop more than once, and affected by the feelings of compunction which the weepings of the people testified, he often eulogised us in the presence of the auditors, exhorting us to labour to sanctify those souls which the Lord had confided to his keeping. We were thus engaged to traverse all the hamlets of the isle which had not a less occasion for our aid. Every evening and morning a great crowd of people were addressed by Father Luchon. As the churches were insufficient to contain the congregations, he was under the necessity of preaching in the open air. The profound silence with which they listened to him was only interrupted by their tears and sighs. The remainder of our day was consumed in teaching little children, in visiting the sick, and those different houses where several families assemble for purposes of labour. We gave them instructions in these places, on the subject of their duties, and we responded to their difficulties in the way of conversation, without interrupting their labours. The public preachings were scarce of more utility than the private conversations. The reception of the sacraments, which, for the preceding twenty years, several persons had disused, a reformation of gross abuses, and the change of manners, were the fruits which we extracted from our toils. After consuming two months and a half in labours such as these, the time was come, we thought, for passing over to the isles in the vicinity. At the first report of our departure, these good islanders gathered round us in a crowd : priests, men, women, children, young and old, laity and clergy, all shed tears as if some universal

calamity had visited them. You are our fathers, they exclaimed, the angels of our dwelling-houses, the guides of our salvation; in the name of Jesus Christ, have pity on us—abandon us not. So many marks of tenderness accompanied these words, we ourselves could not restrain our tears: we partially consoled them by holding out the hope that we might soon return, and haply take up our residence among them, for the purpose of maintaining them in the pious resolutions they had formed. But, before consenting to our departure, they endeavoured to testify the gratitude they felt for us by a letter patent, which was signed by three and fifty individuals, including the principal persons of the island, as well as the curates of Siphanto. Translated word for word, this patent is as follows:—

We, the Primate and Chiefs of the people, undersigned, return our humble thanksgiving to the Saviour, for the succour he has sent us in the persons of the Rev. Fathers Jacques Xavier Portier and John Luchon, religious of the company of Jesus. Justice, truth, and gratitude compel us to testify to all mankind, that they have conducted themselves here as Priests, who were worthy of the Gospel, to the very great advantage of our island; they seemed to seek for nothing but the glory of the Lord and the eternal interest of men; their conversation is extremely edifying, their councils very salutary, their doctrine very sound, their disinterested and unwearied application to preaching in the churches, the houses, and the squares, in confessing sinners and visiting the sick, have edified us exceedingly, and the fruits they brought to maturity in this place, afford consolation to us all. We have been assisted in our need

by these venerable Frenchmen, not only in spiritual diseases, but in those that are corporeal; their house was never shut to the patients of our isle, to whom they distributed excellent remedies without any recompense, except that which God bestows on charity. We regard them as physicians of our bodies and our souls, as immediate parents, and as new apostles. The benedictions and the praises with which our island overwhelms them, the tears and prayers with which we now accompany them, evince how much we are affected by all that they have done for us. We should be happy to retain them here, but their zeal, which embraces all the family of man, admits not of it. Happy are the people who even like ourselves, may be able for an interval to see the good example and to hear the holy words of these servants of the Lord. We shall consider as our brothers in Christ Jesus, all persons who henceforth shall receive them as they merit, in evidence of which, we have given them this document, signed at Siphanto, the 7th of September. The signatures of three-and-fifty persons are appended.

After reciprocal adieus, we descended to our bark, and departed from the island in the direction of Serfante. The circuit of this island is perhaps a dozen leagues; the soil of it is dry, mountainous and rocky: the aspect of this place, as it rose upon our view, was quite as dismal, disagreeable and sad as the island of Siphanto, which we left behind, was cheering and delightful. The husbandman reaps no corn, nor ever gathers the "grape nectarian" in this barren island: you scarcely see a tree in it; but arid though it be, cattle are abundant, which browse upon the weeds and shrubs which escape to



existence in the fissures of the rocks. Nevertheless, these animals are never meagre, and the fleeces of the sheep are beautiful and fine. Very fine saffron is found at Serfo; you see at certain seasons of the year prodigious multitudes of large red partridges, resembling those of the neighbouring isles, where gray are seldom seen. The isle contains some mines of iron, as well as one of loadstone.

The people of Serfante principally inhabit an extensive village, standing upon the summit of a steep mountain, at nearly a league from the sea, and another village of inferior size, at three miles distance from the former; together they contain eight hundred people. The inhabitants are poor and rude, the dialect they speak is exceedingly corrupt, and there is something in their accent irresistibly ludicrous. The isle is spiritually governed by the Bishop of Siphanto's vicar, his jurisdiction extends over five or six parishes, which are equally poor and badly kept. A monastery of St. Michael, inhabited by a hundred Caloyers, stands at two leagues distance from the town; we only found the abbot in the house on our visit to the monastery; the religious were all occupied without, some were questing in the isles in the vicinity, some were tending cattle, and others at labour. We may remark as we pass on, that though all Greek monks are called Caloyers by the literary men of France, in Greece they make a difference, where the brethren alone are called by this name; those who are Priests are *Jermonaches*, but to accommodate myself to the habitude of France, I shall term the monastics indifferently, Caloyers. As soon as we arrived at Serfo\*, we looked

\* Serfo or Serfante.

about for some nook to reside in ; we discovered an humble and obscure abode, which had no opening but the door, no furniture or bedding but a mat. We afterwards visited the vicar.

The epitropes or primates and the Turkish Waiwode, paid us much attention ; some medicines administered appropriately, completely won the Waiwode's heart, and he volunteered to aid us to the best of his authority, to exercise our functions.

We publicly addressed the people twice a day, during the period that we spent at Serfo. The pulpit we employed was the summit of a cabin, from the elevation of which we saw ourselves surrounded by multitudes of people, who heard our addresses with profound attention, and with all the symptoms of souls affected by eternal truths. 'Twas requisite to render matters palpable, to propose the questions we discussed in the simplest guise, for they are less acute in Serfo than in Sifanto. The remainder of the day was spent in familiar instructions in private houses, which we visited successively, in consoling the sick and administering remedies, and in assembling the children, and catechising them. All the inhabitants of the isle derived profit from our mission, and received the sacraments of penance, and the eucharist, with sentiments of piety, that edified us highly. We finally forsook Serfante with such consolation of the spirit as could not be expressed, while the people were invoking blessings on our head, and returning thanks to God a thousand times for having prompted us to visit them, amid their rugged hills.

We went to Thermia from Serfo, islands twelve leagues from one another ; the former has derived its

appellative from the Thermes, or the baths of warm water, which made it celebrated once. The circumference of Thermia is fifteen leagues ; though the soil is pretty fertile, the productions are but poor ; barley and wheat are the only produce of the land, the wine is wretched and trees are rare. There is a large village in the middle of the isle, and at two leagues distance a considerable hamlet ; the population is about four thousand. The relics of a ruined castle appear upon an eminence, which ascends between the north and the setting sun ; there are ruined houses round it, as well as the remnants of two Latin churches ; towards the south you see the ruins of an ancient town, which in more fortunate times, must have been equally spacious and well built. Thermia depends upon the Bishopric of Zia, a neighbouring isle, the Bishop's residence. In the town there are thirteen parishes and five monasteries of Grecian monks, but, except one, there's not in all the isle a Latin church, it is attended by a vicar of the bishop of Tino, a native of Venice. Ten or twelve families observe the Latin rite. On arriving in the island, we visited the principal ecclesiastic, a man of much intelligence, whom personal merit and extensive wealth, elevate above the other Priests of Greece ; the most eminent persons in the island at that time in his house, witnessed the obliging reception which he gave us, and the marks of amity with which we were distinguished. We immediately commenced our mission : diurnally as usual, we preached in the church to multitudes of people, who collected from all quarters to hear the novel preachers. An Abbe much respected in the isle, by whom a bishopric had been resigned, the better to attend to his salvation, was the

most constant of our auditors ; wherever we proceeded this virtuous prelate followed us. He also had the zeal to preach, and never omitted in his declamations to eulogize our ministry and doctrine. After many days' instruction, public and particular, the confessions were so many, that our numbers did not suffice : the regulars and seculars of every rank and of every age, came in a crowd to the tribunal of penance, issuing from which they publicly asserted that they counted all their previous confessions for nothing, and that the only confession that gave quiet to their conscience, was that they had just made. The rumour of these confessions caused the ancient confessor of the country, an aged monk, to descend from the recesses of his monastery, in the expectation of obtaining contributions, through the medium of our toils. The confessors have the custom in the Grecian isles, of giving absolution for a sum agreed upon between the sinner and themselves. The old man with his bell accordingly appeared, but he sounded it to very little purpose, and advertised the people of his coming to no effect, for he returned to his monastery with empty pockets. There was a certain man amongst the patients whom we visited, to whom we went less to communicate instruction, than to be edified ourselves : when we offered him some cures for the solace of his evils, alas ! my fathers, he replied, looking at us with an air full of sweetness and respect, why take from me the material of my merit ? true, I am unworthy to participate the grace which I experience, through the medium of these sufferings, but since it has seemed good to his infinite benignity to visit me with these afflictions, far be it from me to seek a solace for these pangs ; attend to my spiri-

tual interests, I pray you, and pass by my body. We must confess, my Rev. Father, that these words were full of such a lively faith, as made us profoundly adore the secrets of the providence of God, who knows how to select such chosen spirits from places that seem of all others the least likely to produce them. Having closed our mission in the town of Thermia, we proceeded to the village which they call Silaka ; it stands upon two petty elevations confronting one another, and which a torrent separates ; Father Luchon preached on one declivity, whilst I ascended, as at Serfo, to the summit of a house, from whence I addressed a numerous assembly. Their sighs, their silence, and the blessings which they showered on us, filled my soul with secret consolation. It was not long before we gathered the first fruits of penance ; they came to confession in such multitudes that it was with difficulty we could catch some moments of repose ; “ woe is me, my Father,” said these worthy people, with a certain naivete that delighted us : “ how often have we said to God, Lord send us hither some one who will teach us to honour and revere you ; ye are they whom God has sent, and now do we perceive that he listened to our prayers. They burst into tears while they were uttering these words ; others spoke in a figurative style : “ My Fathers you are vases which are sealed, into which whatsoever one may put cannot possibly exhale from them. To you we can expose our conscience without apprehension, because we are certain that our secrets sink into an abyss so profound, that they never can emerge from it ; you seek no other object than our amendment, while others there be, who seek nothing but our money.” They were not altogether wrong ; the schismatics of the country are



indiscreet confessors ; and the excess of their exactions was almost inconceivable : they ask forty or fifty crowns for absolving certain sins. We passed but eight days in this village, after which we returned to the town, in order to make thence our way to Andros. If we had delayed our departure, we should have been unable to proceed, for we were followed by a countless crowd of people to our bark. Previously to entering, we delivered them a summary of all we recommended during the period of the mission, and we left them certain memorials capable of reminding them of our instructions. It was necessary to separate at length, which was not without tears on both sides. The isle of Andros is twenty leagues from Thermia. The mountains there are high, and the valleys most agreeable. Here and there, among these vallies, rural dwellings are disseminated, and the streams that glitter through them make an everlasting green. The orange tree, the lemon, the cedar, and the fig-tree, the pomegranate and the mulberry, attain a surprising size in Andros. Its oils are most excellent, and grass, legumes and corn are exceedingly abundant. In that part of the island which looks towards Capodoro, or the promontory of Négrepont, lies the harbour of Gavrio, which might easily contain a considerable fleet. In fact, the fleet of Venice wintered during the last war in the harbour of Gavrio. The precincts of the port are exceedingly desert, and considering its size, the isle is scarcely peopled, for they reckon but 5000 souls. The town, or as they term it, the city of Andros, may contain about a hundred houses, built upon a tongue, or promontory, of earth. Two little bays, which are far from being secure, are formed by the sides

of this promontory. At the termination of this tongue of land, remains of a dilapidated castle, built in the fashion of ancient fortresses, tower above the deep. Within the town itself, there is a very handsome castle, which wants nothing but the roof: the windows are adorned with finely-chiseled marble. The arms and the cyphers of the Signores Summaripa, to whom this isle belonged, but who have established themselves at Naxos since the Turkmen took the island, are dispersed over the walls. At four leagues from the city, in travelling towards the south, you meet *Apano castro*, another habitation. Every ancient building, on an elevated site, is called *Apano castro*, throughout the Grecian islands.

From insufficient population, a century ago, they introduced Albanian families to cultivate the soil: they were placed in separate villages, three leagues from one another. *Arna* is the one, and the other is *Molakos*.

The chief persons of the isle are descended from Athenians, and possess the richest districts, which makes the people very poor. They reside without the town, and they never come within it unless called by public business, or the interests of their trade. Five-and-twenty years ago, a corsair of Ciotat, sought to sack the little city. The little castles of the country have been built since that event, which place the people in security from insults of the species. In visiting the tenants of these towers which are far asunder, the missionaries' labours are by no means inconsiderable. Andros has a bishop, whose abode is in the town. Besides many little churches which are scattered through the isle, there are two extensive monasteries of Caloyers in Andros. One of these, named *Agra*, is at two leagues from Gavrio. The

handsome church of Agra is devoted to our lady. The second, Panachrando, is at one league from the city. There is a Latin bishop also, who has latterly been absent, whose diocese is managed by a vicar in his absence.

The families belonging to the ritual of Rome were at one time 800 ; the greater part of whom were extinguished by a plague. The others, to avoid the persecutions of the Greeks, were perverted by these tyrants, or forsook their native isle. The Latin ritual reckons but one family as followers : however, the family is numerous, and the ritual is accredited by the firmness displayed by the noble who maintains it, and by the qualities which render him the first man in the isle. The Jesuits of Scio had a mansion in the town, with a little church, devoted to St. George, from which they were expelled. Though born subjects of the Grand Signior, these fathers often had to suffer the most cruel persecutions. The R.R.P.P. Capucines had an hospital, which they have quitted and resumed repeatedly. One of these religious has returned hither lately. It had long been an object which the Androites desired, to see our establishment amongst them ; but our scantiness of workmen and our poverty, precluded the idea. Our frequent expeditions are a substitute for this ; they are burdensome to no one, and productive of great benefit.

According to our custom, on arriving at Andros, we proceeded to present our respects to the prelate. Our reception was obliging, and we were afterwards aided by this gentlemen's authority in the functions of our ministry. In the beginning of Advent, with the Greeks a time of

fast, we began our exhortations in the two principal churches. The bishop was amongst the most constant of our auditors. To reform the principal disorders and most prevalent abuses being our paramount design, they became the subject of our sermons, and of the particular instructions we gave in every house. Such force was given to our words by heaven, that the manners of the people immediately changed. Sincere reconciliations, and immediate restitutions, repudiation of bad women, and reception of the sacraments, were proofs of conversion which could not be denied. A compliment was paid us by a chief man of the isle. "I saw you in a dream, three weeks before your coming, my fathers," he said one day as he saluted us; "an interior voice addressed me as the vision passed before me," he continued. "Behold whom I have sent for the purpose of converting you; if you lose this opportunity you are lost for ever!"

Whether this was mere imagination, or the providence of God, he made a general confession; and a thousand times we thanked the God of mercies, who omits no means whatever to conduct men to himself. This mission terminated, we departed for Arna, a town of the Albanians, at which when we arrived we were exceedingly fatigued, for we climbed a mountain on our way, whose acclivity was three leagues high, while carrying our consecrated ornaments and remedies, and down the other side it was two leagues more by very rugged pathways, encumbered and obstructed by brambles and rocks. We ultimately entered Arna, the inhabitants of which, are poor and rustic with no approximation to barbarity, however. The succeeding day, the sabbath, we proceeded to the churches, where multitudes were

gathered. In the first place we assured them that the motive of our visit was their everlasting welfare ; we should cause them no expense ; and for administering the sacraments, for instructions in religion, and application of our remedies, the solitary guerdon we requested was their prayers.

We ultimately won their confidence ; in consequence every house in the vicinity was opened to us, and they heard our exhortations with astonishing avidity. Four days passed over us in this way ; on the vigil of the fifth we were burdened with confessions, which were general confessions for the greater part. While tears suffused their eye-balls, these worthy men exclaimed, “ Alas, we begin now at last to learn to live as christians should do.” Nothing moved us more than to see them in the middle of December, coming from the bottom of their mountains, across frightful ravines, to hear the word of God, to confess their offences, and propose their doubts. The utter destitution in which these poor people are left by their ecclesiastical superiors, is deserving our compassion. Once a year alone, that is on holy Thursday, some monks, from the two monasteries established in the isle, come amongst the people, for the purpose of confessing them. The very form of absolution is unknown to many of these monks. They have a certain routine which they follow in qualifying weighty sins. The next proceeding of the monk is to ask a sum of money. When the money is reckoned down, the confession is concluded. They sometimes fail to take the trouble of going into details ; they put a question to the penitent that serves instead, contenting themselves with asking if things have not gone on as they did the



year preceding, to which the penitent says "yes," and presents the sum of money, on which the ceremony ends and another is admitted. We have endeavoured to remedy so crying an abuse, and many similar abuses which it would be tedious to detail. Three weeks being concluded of our missionary exercises, when upon the point of returning to the town, we gave one of our Greek catechisms to the epitrop of the valley, who promised us to read it every Sunday during mass. This will be the means of maintaining pious sentiments amongst the people we have taught. As soon as we returned to the town, we directed all our views towards Apano Castro, where we knew that spiritual necessities were pressing. Apano Castro is a valley that is surrounded with acclivities, which are spread over with hamlets. On these elevated slopes from fifteen to twenty towers of the chief men of the isle have been erected. What is more singular than this is, that the remnants of a church and of a very ancient temple are seen mouldering in this place, the cupola of which latter subsists and appears to be in good taste. A finely-polished marble, black and white in colour, representing roses and laboured with much taste, constitutes the pavement of the church. The people of the country, in digging up the ruins, most completely in decay, assert that an image of our lady was discovered, which has been greatly venerated in the country ever since. The hearts of the people of Apano Castro were well prepared, we found, and the evangelic seed was not scattered there in vain. Every person in the valley put his conscience in good order, and promised to pursue the regulation which we gave for the direction of their lives. The bishop having learned that

we had formed an abridgment of the Articles of Faith, and obligations of a Christian, requested the production that he might cause it to be read to the parishioners every Sunday after mass throughout his diocess. The chief persons of the isle designated *Archos* were so affected by the sermon that we preached on their injustice, that they took immediate measures to repair the ill inflicted on the people by their violent exactions. Many came to confession at the head of all their clan. The paramount person has a daughter of eighteen years of age, who wants none of all those qualities that make a lady amiable. This virtuous virgin protests that she desires no other spouse but her Redeemer. She already has refused the richest suitors in the isle. Her father is not willing to coerce her inclinations, but his reluctance to put her in a nunnery with ladies of her rite, is quite equivalent to that aversion. He has been often heard to say that the illustrious nuns of France should found a nunnery at Naxos: he interrogates us often as to this intended nunnery, declaring his intention of giving them his daughter, together with her dowry, if she choose to take the veil.

The above describes a portion of the progress of our mission. 'Tis by God's especial blessing that we have been thus successful in obtaining the affections of these people; for seculars and regulars, the Greeks are educated in a violent aversion for the Latins and their discipline. We were received universally with kindness, when we came, and we have been bitterly regretted when leaving the island. What good might not be done in these great countries were we reinforced with workmen! Reflect my Rev. Father, that the mission of Constantinople, at the lowest calculation, is a hundred

thousand souls; that Smyrna has as many; Naxia, ten thousand; and Santorin more than eight, without speaking of the mission which we have now delineated and in which we had to preach to upwards of 12,000. I implore with all my soul the sacred patrons of Greece, who, from the summit of the skies, see the frightful destitution of countries formerly so fervent and so catholic, to intercede with Christ that he touch the hearts of those who have the salvation of such myriads in their hands, and who can contribute to effect that salvation by their charity, by not suffering a harvest so extensive to to perish utterly for the want of labourers to reap it.

I am with respect, &c. &c.

FRANCIS JAMES XAVIER PORTIER.

## EXTRACTS

*From the letter of a Missionary at Damascus, to the Rev. Procurator of the Missions of the Levant:—*

MY REV. FATHER,

I was on the point of leaving Sidon and departing for Damascus, in pursuance of the will of my superiors, when they changed my destination. I was desired to take a different route and to prepare to spend some months in the mountains, which are known by the name of Anti Libanus. As the patriarch of the Maronites was speedily to publish the Jubilee throughout his extensive patriarchate, it was thought that I might render some assistance to our Missionaries who were about to be extraordinarily occupied. Though Damascus as a residence, has been highly eulogised, I confess to you, my father, that I conceived a greater liking for the mountains. In the mountains we may say with verity, that we serve God for himself and with perfect disinterestedness; no portion of our life is dedicated to effeminacy, and self-love cannot be flattered by the functions which we exercise. I was delighted to commence my career in such a place, and by means of a Mission of such difficulty to consecrate the first fruits of my apostleship. To prepare me, I was sent to our dwelling at Antoura. From the time that I arrived I devoted all my energy to the study of the Arabic; I pursued it with avidity, and after a little time was sufficiently acquainted with it to render some assistance; nevertheless, I was yet very awkward in a foreign tongue, of which I ignored the delicacies. I imagined that I should have nothing

else to do in these mountains but to practise patience, but I learned by my personal experience the advantage of blindly abandoning yourself to the guidance of providence, and that if we have a little good-will we may always find something useful to perform. The presence of zeal supplies the absence of all other qualities. My employments were proportioned to my talents ; whilst our priests were making, with incredible fatigue, evangelical excursions in every direction, to induce the faithful to take advantage of the grace enunciated. I was entrusted with the task of teaching the truths of our religion to the children. A few ignorant and clownish children was the portion of the flock which they confided to my care. This is not, I must confess, the most illustrious office in the ministry, but perhaps it is of all others the most essential. Such was the opinion of Ignatius and of Francis Xavier, our fathers and our masters ; and I fear not to assert, that, if this were more attended to, certain Missions would not make such report, it is true, but they would certainly produce more fruit ; let that be as it may, at least I had some participation in the good that was effected, and I was perfectly content. I commenced by prescribing to myself in my instructions a precise and facile method, to which God gave the increase. I traversed the different villages ; I assembled all the children, I found little intelligence but much docility. I reckoned upon having under my direction children merely, but fathers and mothers who were destitute of every spiritual succour were little more enlightened than their infants, requiring catechists as much as preachers. By this means my functions were encreased and my labour augmented, and if I became not the universal man, I became at least the necessary one ;



but, thanks be to God, I was enabled by his grace to encounter these difficulties, in which my success surpassed my hopes; I proceeded from the villages to the cabins, where my labours recommenced. This distinction between villages and cabins will probably cause you some surprise, I shall solve the mystery: it was now the season when they manufacture silk, when this season returns the mountaineers for the most part forsake their habitations and retire to the campaign, where, amid gardens of white mulberries, destined solely for the sustenance of silk-worms, they prepare to pass the season. They procure branches of trees like the Jews of the tabernacles, with which in the middle of these gardens they construct them summer houses, perhaps twenty paces long, and from six to seven wide; here they rear a multitude of silk-worms which they deposit on a species of hurdles, constituting five or six stages, one above the other like the shelves of a cupboard; all the cabin is occupied by these compartments except that at the right and the left there are two pathways to carry food to the worms, an operation performed twice a day, at six in the morning and six at eve. I was one day standing at the entrance of one of these cabins when the master to whom it appertained besought me to come in and bestow my benediction; as I was not very familiar with the customs of the country, I felt some repugnance to the performance of this ceremony; one of our fathers who happened to be with me at the time, whispered in my ear, on perceiving my embarrassment, that so great was the respect entertained for our Missionaries by the Maronites, it would be considered as an evil augury if we did not visit them and bless their cabins in the season of the silk. This discourse decided me, and

entering the cabin I complied with the request. I had visited repeatedly our manufactories in France, but an operative had never proposed anything like this. Pardon me, my father, I did not remember at the time the declaration of our Lord, that you may find more faith amongst foreigners, in some instances, than amongst the children of Israel. I examined this abode which was built with such rapidity, and discovered many marks of ingenuity; but the creatures for whom it was erected arrested my regards, and rivetted my attention, I remarked that they were perfectly motionless, with their heads a little raised: I asked the person who presided the cause of this appearance, he informed me that this was the first fast of the worms, which now had continued for three days, that they had three additional fasts to perform, that the duration of these latter fasts would be shorter than the first, that after the third they would attach themselves to bundles of thorns, and that upon these bundles they should spin their silks. He was a proficient in the business, I did not contradict him nor push my inquiries any further. Thus, the christians of the mountains during three months of the year direct their industry to cultivate an article which constitutes their greatest wealth.—This is in reality the period of their harvest; it is a period when the Missioners have great success; as to the rest these Missions are extremely painful, and I learned a lesson from these essays of my zeal, which enabled me to appreciate the saying of a Jesuit in France: that, invariably crosses are the portion of the apostleship in every country, and that difficulties await us in many other places besides Canada. These cabins are often very far from one another, they are sometimes situated upon rocks, so steep as to be almost

inaccessible ; would you believe it, my Rev. Father, the charity of Jesus Christ carries our Missionaries thither, zealous and undaunted ; they consider the most overwhelming fatigues as trifles when the object is to establish the kingdom of the Lord on a solid basis, amongst so many people, whose souls have been confided by heaven to our hands. Alas, they never would have heard the accents of religion were it not for us, and surrounded by unfaithful nations as they are, perhaps they would have fallen into infidelity. We quitted them only when they forsook the plain to return to their mountains, and our toils only ended with their labours. Hardly had this Mission ended when my superiors destined me for another, and did me the honor to associate me with a confessor of our Lord : he was a fervent and fearless Missionary who having gone to console the christians in that forsaken church, had the happiness of suffering imprisonment and chains in Mesopotamia : what an object for the emulation of my nascent zeal ! we were sent to discover a country which nobody had hitherto explored. In order to make our success more certain in this enterprise we had long cultivated the acquaintance of a christian who had much credit in the canton, it was he who was to serve us as an introducer, and he was to facilitate our intercourse with his compatriots ; we found it difficult to bring him round, for he seemed very adverse to us at first ; he was reluctant to recognise Athanasius as the real patriarch, and he entered into the errors of Cyril the Schismatic with infatuated blindness. What an obstacle was this to vanquish, first it was necessary to win him over to catholicity before he could be won over to esteem the catholics, and this was not the work of men, 'twas the operation of the Deity.

God, who holds in his hand the hearts of men, and can raise up children of Abraham from the stones if it please him, so completely changed the Schismatic, that he was prevailed on to renounce his errors, a recantation in which his family participated: returned to the bosom of the church; as the most certain mark of his conversion he promised us a free access to the people of his nation; he subsequently kept his word; he accompanied us wherever we proceeded, and invariably exhorted the people who surrounded him, at least to give us a favourable hearing. When the lucky moment marked by providence arrived, with what incredible transports of joy did we not proceed to labour in this novel vineyard; we assumed the apparel of the people of the country in order to pass with less impediment; it was in the beginning of last year that we departed for the mountains. Unlike America, cotton does not grow on trees in this country, they sow it every year, and from every grain of seed a stem of two feet high issues from the earth, with a quantity of branches which bear a kind of fruit no bigger than a nut; five or six little seeds with some cotton as white as snow is drawn from within the fruit when ripe; the shell by which the cotton is surrounded is little thicker than the finest parchment. We ultimately arrived at the termination of our Mission, after various fatigues caused by the greatness of the journey as well as by the heat, which was excessive at this season. There are many villages of some extent at the basis of the lofty mountain, which the Arabs call *Jabal Chek*, that is, the mountain of the aged man; as all the year the head of the mountain is covered with snow: you feel the allusion. As soon as we arrived we proceeded to the dwelling of the worthy christian upon whom we

much depended, we were not deceived, he received us with demonstrations of joy, and an effusion of the feelings of the heart, which it is difficult to imagine. When we crossed his threshold it was nearly night; he immediately perceived that we were the Missionaries whose approach he had expected, and he made ready to receive us at his door. He took our right hand on approaching us, and kissing it, respectfully placed it on his head as a token of subjection, he then addressed the priest by whom I was accompanied, in terms such as these: "My father, thou art welcome," he exclaimed; "at the very time that thou wert coming I had thee in my heart, the blessing of heaven has descended, and together with thy friend enters my dwelling in thy company; I look upon this moment as the happiest of my life, since angels of the Lord do me the honor of a visit, and carry to our country affluence and peace. I thank the author of the universe for having procured my people such felicity—come in my father, come in to my dwelling where thou mayest command and must be obeyed." These compliments which appeared to be emphatical to us, are in the oriental style, and expressed in Arabic, they have a beauty, nobleness and grace, which cannot be transfused into our language. My companion responded to the best of his ability, and liberally repaid politeness with politeness. As soon as the first civilities were done we were led into a large apartment where several persons were assembled, who, in imitation of the father of the family came and kissed our hand and placed it on their head; among these people we remarked a child of five years old who bent upon his knees as he approached us and craved our benediction: we looked upon him with surprise, so much wisdom in an



age so tender filled us with astonishment ;—at baptism they called him John, and his surname was the *Riches of the Deity*. A custom prevails among the Arabs which prevents sons from inheriting the surname of their father. A name is imposed upon a newly born child very different from that of the father of the family ; the latter is no longer known by his ancient appellative, they call him the father of such a person, as for instance, the father of *the Riches of the Deity*.

The *Riches of the Deity* was one of those fine characters for whose formation grace and nature appear to have united, in order to bestow a blessing on a christian family. He joined to a gentle disposition and a great desire to learn, a happy physiognomy and a charming and fascinating ingenuousness. Concerning religion he put questions to us of such a nature as we should have admired in a person of maturer years. He conjured us to instruct him, with a species of importunity which is always delightful to a missionary who seeks to serve his master.

I perceived that in this novel mission I was destined to resume my old vocation as a catechist : I raised my eyes to heaven for assistance in these functions ; you will subsequently see that this was of much use to me. There was in the room that we had entered, a carpet made of goat-skins : we sat ourselves upon it in the fashion of the country. My companion made enquiries as to the bias of the public mind in our regard : he would have reason to be delighted with his journey they assured him ; our instructions they asserted would be numerously attended.

Supper was shortly after served ; a large rush-basket full of loaves of bread, which were as flat and tough as

parchment, was brought into the apartment. No other bread is eaten in the country but this. It was distributed to us by the master of the mansion with the utmost liberality: the supply that we received would have served us several days. This is invariably the custom of the Arabs; their object is to make you understand that plenty prevails amongst them, and that the proprietors of this abundance are munificent. You will see by and by that a little taste and cleanliness would be no injury. Every one assumed a seat beside the basket. Three cups of earthenware were served at the same time. The first was filled with rice, so indifferently seasoned that Arabs alone could eat it. The second was a species of wine, which, from the manner in which it was prepared, resembled honey. Many morsels of cheese were contained in the third, which were floating in a quantity of oil. An epicure of Europe, between these three dishes, would have been embarrassed to select. Neither napkins, spoons, nor forks, were at the board. The liquor that we got was as plentiful as our viands. We had an immense vase of water for our drink, from which every one present took a gulp in turn. This was a repast to honour our reception. We never again got so sumptuous a meal during the continuance of the mission; for the Arabs, who content themselves with little, seldom indulge in these extraordinary festivals. Compare this mode of living with that of the monastics of France, and however mortified they may be, you will discern a difference. Certain it is that after the repast a tobacco pipe was brought us, and that the father of the family, having lighted it, presented it to us. We begged him to excuse us as civilly as possible, insinuating that it was a ceremony contrary to the customs of our

country. He seemed satisfied with our excuses and he accepted them. He made a thousand enquiries concerning France, of which he had heard many marvels. By and by a crowd of christians entered, to testify their joy at our arrival; they were all either Surians or Greeks. Their demonstrations of affection delighted us the more as we had anticipated an indifferent reception on their part, on account of the bad impressions made upon their minds by certain schismatical religious, who visit them from time to time, less to instruct them in religion than to make them inimical to the missionaries; but these hostile demonstrations of impiety and schism were rendered harmless, and were even made advantageous to our progress by heaven. The rumour of our arrival having speedily diffused itself, all the village came to visit us with confidence. As there was no church in the hamlet, we were obliged to arrange an altar in a hall. The people of the town assembled here. The mission was commenced by my companion by so pathetic and so affecting a discourse, that his auditors were generally dissolved in tears. A beginning such as this was full of promise. The following is the order of our exercises. Mass succeeded morning prayer, and the former was succeeded by a sermon. Some worthy people, who were anxious to ascertain the way to heaven, separated when the sermon finished. Some applied to me, and some to my companion, who gave them such familiar instructions as suited the occasion. As I scarcely knew the Arabic, I expressed myself indifferently, yet I was attended to. My auditors' simplicity gave me great delight. Some of the people more advanced in years, as soon as they had acquired the *Pater* and the *Credo*, besought me to permit them

to repeat these prayers, that they might exhibit their proficiency to their admiring neighbours; and shortly after, those who were younger imitated them. All the morning was consumed in these sacred exercises. Whilst my companion, after dinner, went to visit the unhealthy, collecting my pygmean congregation, I commenced the catechism. The *Riches of the Deity*, to whom I had given particular instructions, played the part of an Apostle. He repaired to the places in which he had been accustomed to play. He addressed his comrades: "During the mission, play is prohibited," he exclaimed; "it is to give offence to God to take amusement till the fathers have departed." The words of the child influenced his companions; they unanimously followed him. At the head of his troop he entered the chapel with his eyes upon the earth, with his little hands united: "Father" said he to me, "teach us to know, to love, to serve and to pray to the God whom you inform us of." His example inspired all his followers, with modesty, with attention, with docility, insomuch that for a moment I imagined myself not the centre of a circle of frivolous children, but in one of pigmy sages; and the attention and respect of these little innocents often excited me to tears. Only conceive with what affection, zeal, and ardour I gave myself to my employments. A sermon succeeded to this "christian doctrine," and on the dissolution of the crowd, and when every one retired, they overwhelmed us with benedictions. I deceived myself in saying that every one retired, for several remained, by whom we were detained till night was far advanced, and who could not be exhausted while hearing the word of God. So fatigued were we, we scarce had power to read our Breviary; nay, we scarce had

leisure, recumbent on the ground, to snatch some moments of repose. Days so full of labour passed us with celerity. In spite of the abundant benedictions vouchsafed to this mission from the skies, our work was left unfinished ; more pressing wants required our presence elsewhere. In our own despite we were obliged to separate ourselves from the cherished flock, but we despair not of one day or other being able to return to crown our works, to finish the edifice. I shall say nothing of the grief with which they honoured us, of the tears with which their farewell was accompanied. These are consolations which God administers to missionaries, not so much to compensate their toils as to animate their zeal and to sustain that animation.

Having returned to Damascus, we did not long remain there, and the obedience which had impelled us thither, soon dispatched us from the city, to pay a visit to some Christian families who had been long in want of missionaries. In this village are the famous sources of the Damascus—from one of these a jet of water issues so abundantly, that an absolute river seems emerging from the hollow of the rock. The people of this village are Turks with few exceptions, but less hostile to the Christians, and having more humanity than their brethren of Damascus ; our own experience gives a proof of this. We proceeded to pay a visit to the chief of the village, he is esteemed one of the best heads in the country, and one who understands his law most intimately ; he received us favourably, he was so civil as to say that he had the utmost respect for persons, such as we were, and that nothing was more strongly recommended by their prophet, than to treat us with humanity ; that as to the rest he took us under his protection, and that we were perfectly at



liberty to visit any place we pleased without apprehending insult from any individual in his district. This address surprised us; his assertion concerning his prophet was enigmatical to us; by and by I shall give you the solution. We thanked him for his bounty, and we made a profitable use of his permission in ministering to the Christians and visiting the Turks who received us willingly, and seemed to hear our words with pleasure; two of them went so far as to make an avowal that the true religion was the Christian faith. This excursion afforded us a lasting subject of consolation; it palpably evinces the mercy that a God infinitely benevolent, and who ordains all things for the bliss of his elect, sometimes bestows on some predestinated spirits.

A Surian more than eighty years of age, had been deprived of the use of his limbs for eighteen years, and blind for more than ten. He had a lively faith, and, though long extended on that bed of sorrow, he had supported his afflictions with admirable patience. Though his infirmities and age convinced him that the gates of death were near, he flattered himself and expressed the feeling to his acquaintances, that until he had seen some of the anointed of the Lord, heaven would not call him. A confidence so firm could originate alone in some presentiment which had been imprinted on his spirit by the Holy Ghost. Let that be as it may, as soon as he knew we were arrived, "The promises of heaven are accomplished," he exclaimed, "you will now permit your servant to depart in peace, O Lord." He sent some persons from his house to implore us to repair to him as he was not able to come himself to seek us; the feelings he expressed, and the language he made use of were really worthy a

christian soul. Religon, my Rev. Father has its heroes every where, "My Father," he said to the missionary my companion, "you are as it were assisting angels who diffuse instruction, light and benediction, whithersoever you proceed : for many revolving years have I yearned to behold you, and I expected always to receive this consolation before the termination of my days. I feel convinced at present that heaven itself engraved this expectation on my heart, my wishes are accomplished, in dying now I have nothing to regret, you arrive at the propitious moment to receive my dying sighs and the last confessions of my weakness—animate me in my combats—cause our Saviour's blood to flow upon my soul—apply his merits to my wants—feed me with his flesh and put the crown on my felicity—put the seal on my election by the sacraments of our religion. I feel my end approach, what happiness it must be for a sinner like myself to expire within your arms, and in thus expiring to be able to repose my conscience in your hands, and my soul in those of Christ. Make haste to purify my soul by the sacrament of penance, and assist me to bless the infinite mercies of our God."

At these affecting words his sons and grandsons who were round his bed burst into tears, and mine were irrepressible ; religion sometimes makes impressions on us which cannot be controlled. The missionary many times embraced the dying man, and exhorted him to profit by this ultimate assistance which was thus offered him by heaven, by consummating the work of his salvation. We left them together, the man made a general confession which was broken frequently by sobs and tears ; the family re-entered, and, prostrating themselves upon the

floor, they received the benediction of the patriarch to whom the communion was administered, whose fervour and whose piety re-doubled when the Eucharist appeared. A crucifix was given him which he amorously kissed, and with his lips glued to the figure of his master he sweetly expired, tranquilly embracing the image of our Saviour. Oh what a death was this, my father, and so stricken was I with it that I could not restrain myself from saying to the disconsolate family. "My children, religion deceives us or your father is a Saint." I observed to them that infidelity and schism never present spectacles like this; a thousand times they thanked us. We gave the other christian families the necessary attendance. This singular circumstance signalized our course; we could not tire admiring it, and on our way returning, it was the subject matter of all our conversation. My companion confessed that he had never experienced a joy so sweet and so pure in all his life before, and that he had been well rewarded by that single moment for all his past fatigues; judging from what was passing in my bosom at the moment I could credit this avowal. An inhabitant of the hamlet who was travelling with us, and like us was going to Damascus, reminded me that I had been curious to know why christian religious had been so strongly recommended by Mahomet to his followers. If you wish, he added, to ascertain the reason, and to sound the heart of this mystery, I shall introduce you to an inhabitant of the city to which we are proceeding, who is capable of informing you as he is learned in the law and intimately acquainted with the history of the country, and who will communicate any intelligence you may require with pleasure. He named the learned doctor and deeming his advice judi-

cious, I did not consider it my duty to neglect it. I was pleased to have an opportunity of obtaining intelligence upon a point upon which opinions so much differed. While I was yet in France and preparing for these missions, I had attentively perused all that the learned have written on the subject of Mahomet and of the Koran. I had read the article of Bayle upon this prophet. I wished to make myself master of the subject, and since my return my paramount desire has been to fathom the affair. The discoveries I made in my researches have been these:—

Having visited the man whom the traveller had indicated, I found him to be a christian, and as a consequence, I questioned him with more facility, and to make him acquainted with the matter in debate, without further preliminaries, I addressed him in the following words: Is it true that the prophet of the Mussulmans instructed his disciples to receive christian religious with civility. Perfectly true, he replied. But Frenchmen, I responded, and those whose erudition is the most profound, maintain the deepest silence upon this point; a syllable is not to be discovered on the subject in their writings. That may be, said he, but it is not the less true upon that account, and notwithstanding all their science, we as orientals are better to be believed than they, having sources of information which are inaccessible to them. At the same time unrolling his papers, he discovered an ancient manuscript. It was a history of Mahomet, in the Arabic, detailing his adventures at full length. “You know our language,” said he to me, “read, this will terminate our differences and decide the question between the French and us.” I perused this manuscript or rather I devoured

it, and as I was unsatisfied with one perusal, I begged him to suffer me to keep it for a day or two—he willingly complied. What follows is a faithful extract, if I found any thing of a different description I could not obtain your forgiveness for reporting it, besides it would be foreign to my subject; I leave that to those sorts of authors who in order to flatter the fashion of the day interlard their works with infinite obscenities, and who neither respect manners nor religion. According to this manuscript Mahomet was a native of Mecca. The birth of Mahomet was obscure. As the man had lofty and elevated sentiments, he sought a deliverance from misery and the realisation of a princely fortune. As even Mahomet was no prophet in his own country, he became a stranger in a foreign clime. An opportunity for this was offered by a famine which afflicted his father land; he joined a caravan of his compatriots which was going to seek corn in the Hauran, an article not to be found any where else. The Hauran is at two days' journey from Damascus, at the southern side. It is a district of which, the soil is very fertile: in seasons the most unpropitious, crops are abundant in the Hauran, and its grain is considered as the best in Syria. There abode in this country at that time, a religious man, whose name was Sergius: severe and regular, but obstinately Arian, Sergius was one of the most ardent partizans of the opinions of that heresiarch. Amongst those who had come with the caravan to Mecca, Sergius perceived the young Mahomet, he was stricken with his countenance, he remarked him with interest, he was a young man, elegantly made: the noble and distinguished demeanour of the youthful prophet made an immediate impression upon Sergius, he was delighted with his conversation,



he perceived that his mind was remarkably vivacious, and with wise prescience he deemed him capable of something great; he attached him to himself, and moreover, proposed retaining him for several years. Though this proposition had displeased Mahomet, the young Arab would still have received it out of sheer necessity. He became the disciple, not the servant, of the Surian. Pliant and imitative by nature, to his master his disposition appeared docile, he attended to his lessons and he appreciated them; born as he was in the bosom of idolatry he knew its inconsistency and he hastened to renounce that gross and superstitious creed. But if Mahomet thus escaped one precipice 'twas only to descend into another: in turning christian he unhappily became a heretic, denying the divinity of the word "that was made flesh." The Arians assert that our Saviour was a *perfect* creature, but simply a creature, notwithstanding. Hence the sublime notions of our Saviour cherished by the Mussulmans; they regard him as a prophet and as a very great prophet, not as a deity, however; I quote this observation from the manuscript.

Acquainted with the verities of christianity, Mahomet conceived the idea of communicating his acquisitions to his country, and of thus withdrawing his brethren from the abyss of idolatry. Full of the project upon which he ruminated, he returned to Mecca with a caravan: as soon as he arrived he began his dogmatising, and found but little trouble in destroying the plurality of Gods. In lieu of the law that he abolished another law was to be substituted; he acquired confidence from his successes, it became his ambition to become a legislator. He naturally selected the religion of the christians; he was a professor of the faith, and the tincture he had got of it was more than

superficial, but so well was it diffused amongst mankind that he never would be taken for the author of it, besides he wished to be a legislator; he perceived that there was nothing in the christian system which could flatter sensual hearts. The Jewish people had ceased to constitute a corporation, or nation, or religion; they were dispersed and isolated throughout the universe; he preferred them to the christians, at least for his present purpose. He imagined that in appropriating Jewish spoils detection would become more difficult; thus he had recourse to the Jewish institute, he detached many of its practices which compose a portion of his own. It sufficed not to invent a new religion, it should be established on a stable basis, the edifice should be perpetual. His natural eloquence and capacity to counterfeit the prophet, rallied thousands round him; nevertheless, there were some indocile individuals who refused to hear him, who conceived the resolution of ridding the world of the legislator. The existence of a conspiracy against his life was intimated to Mahomet; though he had wit enough to make laws, he felt himself deficient in the fortitude necessary to act the martyr, so he resolved upon flight, and attended by many of his followers he retired to Medina where he was received as a messenger from God.

He had hitherto employed no other means than those of exhortation to disseminate his new opinions, but as conversions were no longer quick enough for his purpose, he assumed arms to accelerate events, and this appeared the most compendious method. At the head of some determined Arabs, he attacked his native place, he put the persons who had offered opposition to his enterprise to the sword. This audacious and successful stroke increased

his troops, he was shortly at the head of a formidable army. He obtained the mastery of a considerable extent of territory; his conquering career extended to that very Hauran in which he had appeared in such a different condition a little time anteriorly. He discovered Sergius his master; they had many conferences together, and the mailed warrior again received instruction from the cowed monk; his disciples were alarmed at these conferences; and as Sergius was exceedingly austere they dreaded lest he should induce their chief to whom they had sworn blind obedience, to make their law more onerous. This apprehension, which was probably ill-founded, caused them to adopt a line of conduct which Sergius was the victim of, and he was strangled by them in the night time. The manuscript remarks that the authors of the murder in a previous revel became inebriated—the principal reason of the prohibition of those inebriating liquors which, in the opinion of Mahomet, had produced the crime. To honor Sergius's memory, from whom he had received such friendly offices, the manuscript informs us that Mahomet recommended to his followers to respect christian religious. Such was the substance of the scroll, and its verisimilitude is undeniable; could this then be that celebrated testament which Bayle in his article "Mahomet," has described, and on which he has a long dissertation in his notes. I do not think it is. This manuscript, says Bayle, was brought from the East by Father Pacifique Scaliger, a Capucin, and translated into Latin by Gabriel Sionita; 'twas printed in Paris, 1630; at Rostach, 1638; and at Hamburg, 1690; and found in the monastery of the monks of Mount Carmel the original was placed in the library of the King. The most able critics disagree, he informs us,

as to whether this is an authentic document. Grotius, Vœtius, Bespiers, and many other men of learning, consider it supposititious, while Saumaise, Hinkelman, and Ricault, suppose it genuine. It would not be becoming upon my part to enter into these disputes, as the document that I have read was very different from this real or pretended testament.—I stand by the story I have perused, and Elmacin, I am persuaded, had seen some manuscript like this, since in his life of Mahomet he confesses that according to accounts that the christians have possession of, the feelings of Mahomet were favourable to them. Saumaise has transcribed the expression of Elmacini *Narrat Almachinus in vita Mahumedis ex historiis Christianorum addictum illum fuisse christianis et benevolum*

I am, &c.

*In confirmation of the assertion of the Missionary of Damascus, as to the tolerance of well-informed Turks, and as to their respect for Christianity, we give a letter to the public, which was written by a Missionary to his sister, concerning a religious ceremony which is annually celebrated in the capital of Turkey.—*

MY BELOVED SISTER,

I am too well aware of your affection for religion, and of the interest you take in whatever may concern it, not to make you acquainted with the edifying spectacle which I have seen here recently. Would you believe it, my beloved sister, processions are made with as much tranquillity by the Catholics in Constantinople as in Paris; I shall simply describe what I have seen:—august and solemn as this ceremony is, it is not so marvelous on account of its magnificence, as on account of the liberty with which it is performed, and the respect with which even the Mussulmans regard it. A confraternity dedicated to St. Anne, which flourished here for six or seven centuries, has been extended to the Jesuits' church during half a century; its antiquity is thus respectable. The privileges possessed by this fraternity are not a little singular; the brothers are allowed to chaunt the gospel as if they were deacons, in a stole, and after the communion upon Easter Sunday the brothers receive wine. The noblest Catholics in the country composed this brotherhood at one time, but admission was obtained some years ago for the mer-



chants of France and Venice, by whom additional lustre is conferred on the society; this is rather a remarkable circumstance; these pious establishments commonly decrease in strength as they become old, while successive years have only served to add to the fervency of this. A treasure is possessed by this fraternity which it has preserved in all the revolutions of the capital and empire; it consists of a portion of the crown of thorns which was worn by Jesus Christ, this invaluable relic is verified by the most authentic documents, and the procession that I speak of originates in this. It left our church at two on the night of Holy Saturday, and returned to the church at four, its circuit you may easily imagine is extensive; a multitude of trumpeters in regular array, violin and hautbois players, collected from the ambassadors' palaces, made the city resound with the music of their instruments, and opened the march at the head of the procession; three splendid banners environed by flambeaux succeeded the musicians; the banners were followed by the confraternity, two and two, to the number of two hundred, dressed in albs of the finest and the whitest linen, and each individual carrying a torch. Two choirs of Turkish music, which were by no means destitute of harmony, occurred in the column, with an interval between them; and when the trumpets ceased they responded to each other at this interval; surrounded by fifty wax-lights, a portable altar appeared next, which was magnificently decorated; a figure of the resurrection, of well-wrought silver was standing on this altar. A silver dome, sustained on silver columns, contains an image of our Saviour risen, of which the value is immense. This altar was surrounded by gilded lanterns, adorned with sculpture, which, upon the whole, had a very fine

effect. Cordeliers, Trinitarians, and Dominicans, a long column of the clergy, next appeared, while the rear was brought up by the Jesuits, apparelled in long mantles. The cupola or dome of the canopy was snow white damask, sprinkled with flowers of gold, of which the fringe was perfectly magnificent. This canopy was carried by the prior and the three first officers of the fraternity, girded in a snow white alb like the rest of the society. It was I who had the honour of bearing the venerated thorn. I was vested with a cope and scarf, of gold embroidery. This relic is contained in a golden sheath, enclosed in a cup of crystal, of which the coronation and the foot are of a different material. Priests, apparelled in dalmatics, with a quantity of flambeaux encircled the canopy; silver vases, filled with rose water, were carried by four of the confraternity, with which they incessantly sprinkled the assistants. Mingled with the perfumes, perpetually burned in innumerable censors, this scent embalmed the city as we passed, of which the streets were lined with crowds of people. About twenty of the confraternity and the principal officers of the palace, having each a torch, concluded the procession. There was not the slightest breath of wind, and the heavens could not possibly be more serene.

All the ambassadors at present at the Porte, not excepting those of England and Sweden, had repaired to several houses to see this procession pass. The Marquis de Villeneuve, by whom France is represented, who is distinguished by his solid piety as much as by his zeal to extend religion and sustain it, came with his lady to our church where solemn mass was sung. This church of ours, the finest in the country, as I conceive, was hung with

cloth of gold and cloth of silver, furnished by the prior of the confraternity, a rich Venetian merchant.

The Armenians whom the authority of our ambassador intimidates, have been brought about so much by his caresses, that we have reason to expect their accession to our church. The Armenians requested that the procession should deflect, so as to pass by one of their churches. This favour was accorded with the more facility as the bishop of the church is a Catholic in his heart, and as he only waits for a suitable occasion to declare himself openly, which proceeding would have been taken by him before now, if in the hope of hastening the reunion he had not been persuaded to defer it, as he is more likely to be of service to that measure in his present state. In his cope and mitre he received the procession as it passed before the church. Many of his clergy accompanied him, who were preceded by nearly half a hundred flambeaux. For a few moments the procession halted. One of our deacons intoned the gospel of the day and the prayer of the patron of the church. The prelate approached; I presented him the relic and he kissed it. Showers of rose water were administered diffusely; they scattered it with such abundance, and flowers were flung about in such a quantity, that I was obliged to keep my eyes shut for some moments. The Turks, it is said, flung flowers on the procession from their windows. As I did not see them I cannot guarantee the truth of this assertion. Doubtless this ceremony will surprise you, my beloved sister. I am fully persuaded that you would never have imagined that there is more toleration in Turkey than in England. Every thing was conducted with such piety and decorum as to make it

surpass many of our processions in Europe ; and Christians, so often dissipated in the centre of Christianity, consider it a duty to appear more collected in the eyes of infidelity, to convey a higher notion of the God whom they adore and the sanctity of the religion that they profess. This little narrative will give you pleasure and please such persons as are interested for the glory of our faith.

I am, &c.

LETTER

FROM FATHER GURYNANT,

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Damascus, 4th Nov. 1739.

A general rebellion which has broken out, has been well nigh the ruin of our mission in this city, and has caused us, as it is, the most cruel vexations on the part of the Schismatics and Turks. It had birth at the conclusion of the year 1738. Solomon Pacha being employed in the war which the Grand Signior was waging with the Emperor, a successor was appointed in the person of Hussein Pacha. This officer, who was accustomed to pillage all the towns which he had hitherto controlled, such as Tripoli, Aleppo, &c., calculated upon considerable accessions to his wealth by this new government. But he did not know the genius of the people of Damascus, who are proud and arrogant by nature, and fiercely hostile to every species of domination which galls them in the least degree, a lesson which he learned very speedily at great expense. Friday was the first day of the ebullition ; as Friday is the sabbath of the Turks, I particularly mention this : They repair to the mosques



at mid-day, during the ramadan more especially. From the summit of a tower in the form of a steeple, the people were invited by a marabout to prayer. While every one was occupied extern to the temple in his washings or purifications in anticipation of the moment when admission would be given, the doors were suddenly closed and the priests appeared upon the minarets. "Retire," they exclaimed, "there shall be no orisons to-day, that prayer which issues from a heart which is vexed and venomous displeases the divinity. Go," they continued, "avenge the honour of the prophet; avenge his sacred laws, and do all that your celestial zeal inspires." The priests had hardly spoken when the people ran to arms, nothing could be heard throughout the city but the clash of weapons, and the fire of musquetry, and the cries of fury and tumult, uproar, and commotion. The great men of the town meantime assembled; they repaired to the Mufti to prevail on him to participate in this rebellion, and on receiving his refusal, two of his domestics were murdered in his presence, and the door of his abode was shattered into fragments. He delayed no longer, he is hurried away by the torrent; the great men go to the tribunals and prohibit business to the courts till such time as orders shall be forwarded. Then a great procession was quickly formed, the priests and the pontiff, the magistrates and great men were seen going through the streets in ceremonial dresses, with their hands upon their heads to testify regret and mourning. This spectacle produced the requisite effect; the people became furious; at the first blow, from fifty to sixty persons connected with the Pacha were massacred; the carnage would be more extensive if it had not been reported in the town that the Pacha had

escaped by a secret door from his seraglio. A calm came over the spirit of the people, and the remainder of the day was all tranquillity. The Pacha was informed of this circumstance and that very evening returned to his home; he sent for the Aga of the Janissaries, and the Aga of the Capi-Koulys, who refused obedience, and it was not until next day that they came into his presence. "Why do you not restrain your troops," the Pacha vociferated furiously "I shall teach you to repent your treason; close the doors." His orders were in act of execution when a servant whispered in his ear, that the cannon of the castle was levelled at the palace, and that the match was about to be applied. When he learned this he lowered his tone and spoke of accommodation. The Agas raised their voices very high; peace could not possibly be expected from the city, they said, except upon the following conditions.—1st, He had received 900 purses from the citizens which he should restore.—2nd, A proportion of his troops should be dismissed.—3rd, He should pledge himself in writing to molest no one during the continuance of his authority.—4th, All his prisoners should be set free, provided they laid down their arms and opened their shops as usual. He promised them whatever they required. Hereupon, tranquillity appeared to be established, but governor and governed they kept a wary eye upon one another's movements. It stood the citizens upon; three days after the promise had been plighted, with 4000 men behind him, at the dead of night, the Pacha entered a suburb of the city, of which he had the greatest reason to complain; he abandoned it to pillage, sacking the houses and setting fire to them, and massacreing all who offered opposition. The alarm extended through

the city upon all sides ; the populace assembled so soon, and in such numbers, that, while keeping up a running fight, the Bashaw, who sustained alarming losses, retired with a mutilated fragment of his troops, and shrinking first to his seraglio, he subsequently sought the open campaign. The tumult continued though the Pacha stole away—imagine for a moment, the flagrant excesses of which a violent unbridled populace are capable, who, maddened by their wrongs, and destitute of discipline, can listen to no voice but that of fury—whose frantic passions riot uncontrolled, and who are hostile, openly and avowedly, to all they that bear the name of christianity.

Wherever christians were perceived, they cursed their faith. A certain attraction was attributed to them, which brought down misfortunes on the city ; their houses were forced, and their property was plundered, and they were very happy when their lives were spared. Many ladies died of fear, while others preferred to perish by the scimitar, rather than receive the embraces of the infidels. I have often had a pistol presented to my breast, and a sabre raised above my head : the windows of our house one day were shivered into atoms by repeated vollies. They lighted a great fire at the door of the Franciscans, for the purpose of burning the inmates of the hospital ; the extinction of this fire was a species of miracle. Were I to detail their cruelties, I would never make an end. I return to the Pacha.

Escaped from the city, he proceeded to Neapolis, or Napolose, to Jerusalem, and to the other cities of his government, to levy the accustomed tributes and prepare for a pilgrimage to Mecca. Every one knows that a number of Turks influenced by religion or by interest,

annually repair on a pilgrimage to Mecca, where they suppose the body of their prophet reposes. The city of Damascus is the rendezvous of Islamism. Caravans from Constantinople, and from Turcomania, and Persia, form a reunion at Damascus.

When the vast multitude of pilgrims are all together, and when viands are provided for a two months' march through sterile deserts, the caravans depart, invariably every year fifteen days before the ramadan. The Pacha of Damascus is the master and conductor of the caravan: to him it appertains to give orders for the halt and for the march, to terminate the quarrels which arise among the travellers, and to defend them from the Arabs, who incessantly assault them from their quitting Damascus till their return to that city.

While the Pacha was traversing the towns in his dependency, the people of Damascus were seriously considering how they could prevent his return to their town. They fortified their ramparts wherever they were weak; all dilapidated places were repaired, ammunition and provisions were collected for a siege, and the people put their city in a posture of defence, in case Hussein should return with reunited Pachas which he was absolutely doing as the rumour ran. They took an additional precaution which was very unsuccessful. In justification of their conduct they sent the Emperor a manifesto, but were informed that the Grand Vizier, the protector of his creature the Bashaw, detained the document, which never reached the presence of the Grand Signior.

They were for some time intimidated by this information, insomuch that the Pachas' entrance was not opposed. Of the four conditions that they had extorted, two were

complied with ; the prisoners were set at freedom and the troops had been cashiered ; he derived so much confidence from this compliance, that he ventured to reside in his palace as before. But from the time he arrived to the period of his departure for Mecca, he never dared to show himself in public, nor did he on departing nominate a deputy to manage the Pachalic in his absence. During the anarchy which followed, which gave the malcontents but too much scope,—who found their account in the interregnum, there was no cessation to the troubles of Damascus, which continued till the caravan returned from the desert. When pressed by the Arabs, who hung upon the rear of the caravan like a swarm of wasps, the Pacha had recourse to his cashiered troops, whose admission to Damascus he promised them to procure, but a column of 50,000 men, which deployed from the city during this negotiation, taught him the necessity of being more chary of his promises. They compelled him to a parley which continued for two whole days, during which, the 20,000 pilgrims made a halt. He could only obtain that his troops should be permitted for three days' space, to encamp near the walls that they might remove from the town their effects and families, but when this period was expired, if the tents were not stricken, they should fall upon the soldiers as before. Ever after this disaster Hussein was entirely shorn of his beams, hid in his seraglio, hated by his soldiers, affronted by his people, without authority and without power, he had nothing but the name of a Pacha. When anything was agitated in which he should decide, a mere adventurer, Achmet Abdel Brady, but an intrepid and enterprising spirit called the question to his tribunal, deciding in a tone that com-



pelled obedience. The Pacha in the meantime, maintained a correspondence with the governor of the castle, which lorded it over the city and its environs, and was furnished with artillery; if this citadel were his, he should be indisputably master of the city. But suspecting this intelligence, the Capi-Koulys seized upon the gates of the castle and made the governor a prisoner. Instantaneously the signal ran from minaret to minaret, the rebels re-assembled and hurried to the palace of the Pacha. The onslaught of the citizens was met by the troops with intrepidity, and eventually repelled. In turn the soldiers of the Pacha bore down upon the populace and were irresistible, but the tide turned the succeeding day, when the combat was renewed with equal fury upon either side, and on the evening of the third day, after many vacillations, victory decided in favour of the rebels. The number of the dead was very nearly equal. But the citizens were inconsolable for Achmet Abdel Brady, whose merit and bravery had made him the leader of the revolution. Whilst the sorrowful city prepared a mausoleum for its hero, and invoked his name, as the father and liberator of his country in songs that recorded his achievements, the Pacha, whose palace had been damaged by the fire, fled from the city for the third time. But where were the means of subsisting in the country? He had saved nothing but his life, in the hurry of his flight; he had no resource but to levy contributions, a proceeding that made the measure of his misfortunes overflow.

The plundered peasants crowded to Damascus, filling the streets with complaints of the ravages of Hussein. In the city they met with willing auditors, and the Mufti was consulted, and after many mature deliberations, it

was decided by that dignitary, that the law permitted them to make away with an open enemy of God and men, who aimed at the lives and the properties of others. An expedition was immediately prepared.

The commander-in-chief and his military officers, the Mufti and members of the law, and the most distinguished citizens, issued from the portals of Damascus, with 40,000 men behind them, and the succeeding day their horses halted, where they anticipated meeting the Pacha. Without giving them time to tighten girth, divisions were advanced to occupy the heights and penetrate the valley, but it profited them nothing ; the Pacha, apprised the preceding evening of the danger by which he was approached, decamped with such celerity that 600 horse who followed him were unable to succeed in bringing him to blows. The foe was very far, but the city was as troubled as before ; uproar and commotion universally prevailed, and they never ceased to pillage and affront the christians, so that it was only in October, when order was restored by Osman Pacha, that we could possibly resume our functions. But we are still undelivered from anxiety : besides that, we have not here, as elsewhere, the countenance afforded by a consul. We have to treat with people to whom the name of a Frank is an object of abhorrence, and who have persecuted Apostolic men from the birth of christianity. St. Paul the Apostle, as every one knows, was compelled to conceal himself and fly the fury of their persecution, and we have scarcely seen a week since I came here, which is now three years, in which we have not had to suffer from the Schismatics and Turks.

EPISTLE  
TO THE FATHER PROCURATOR  
OF THE MISSIONS OF THE LEVANT.

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REV. SIR,

You request some account of the voyage I performed from Constantinople to Aleppo, which is a satisfaction which must not be refused you; well I know that you seek for information solely for the purpose of making such arrangements as shall contribute to convert the natives, in the various countries, of which I may have the honour of speaking to your reverence.

I was destined for the city of Aleppo, and yet spent five months at Constantinople, having been commissioned to obtain commandments for the service of our Missions, from the Sublime Porte, and this through the medium of the French Ambassador who was to demand them from the Grand Signior, in the name of the Most Christian King. His Excellency himself has had the kindness to prepare the papers which it was necessary to lay before the Grand Vizier, and which were conceived in terms, in the

highest degree friendly to the Roman Catholic religion, but some misunderstanding or other, the subject of which was diplomatic ceremony, delayed the affair for several months. Feeling that this affair was not likely to be terminated speedily, and becoming weary of my inutility, I prevailed on his excellency to permit my departure for Aleppo. Having waited on the wife of the Ambassador, she was so good as to assure me, as I took my leave, that as the cause of our society was that of Heaven, our business should be her's, and that I might depend upon her cares henceforth, in pursuing and soliciting the matters that we wanted. Could I have confided them to better hands? In placing them in hers, I was placing them in those of piety and virtue; I willingly received such gracious offers; I endeavoured to express my gratitude, and totally delivered from the fardel of solicitude, I ceased to think of anything except departing.

You can travel from Constantinople to Aleppo either by the land or by the sea; I deliberated long as to which I should adopt; I have great aversion for a voyage, as the sea does not suit my constitution. It was spring time now, and the season I supposed would be fully as delightful throughout the extent of my journey, as it was in the metropolis in which I was sojourning; when luckily I saw some travellers arrive who had journeyed over land from the city of Aleppo, and who, though very finely mounted, descended from their horses in a melancholy plight, from the hardships they had suffered, amid frosts and snows in which they had very nearly lost their lives. I learned, in like manner from another traveller, that the carcasses of horses and of human beings were strewn along the road which he traversed from Aleppo. Nothing

more was requisite to render me decisive. I fortified my bosom with the cuirass of the poet, and determined to encounter the terrors of the deep; every thing considered, I came to the conclusion, that suffering was immeasurably preferable to death.

Persons proposed to me to go to Scio, from Scio to Rhodes, and from Rhodes to Cyprus. I might do some good, they told me, during the sojourn I should make at Rhodes, for there in the galleys of the Grand Signior, the number of the slaves was perfectly incalculable. They had no priest although they had a chapel, and I could perform in the middle of these miserable people, the functions of my ministry, with perfect freedom. In the approaching paschal season, it would be such solace to the slaves to see me, and perform their paschal duty, through my means. This was to me exceedingly attractive; however, you will learn by the end of my adventures, that all the merit I can boast of, is that of volition.

Finding I should want a recommendatory letter, a very zealous missionary, a Capuchin, procured me an epistle from the Capitan Pacha, Grand Admiral of Turkey, a person by whom the missionary is much esteemed. It requested the Cadis of Scio and of Rhodes to consider me as one of his domestics, and to allow me perfect liberty to pass in all directions. In return for this kindness of the Capuchin, I'll acquaint you with the uses which he makes of the good will with which he always is regarded by the Capitan Pacha. Through the instrumentality of this Signior, he has caused an Archbishop of the catholic religion to be placed in the Nestorian church, which unhappily exists in the Diarbekir; thus, the solitary use



which he makes of his protection, is to benefit the christian faith. This missionary friar attended the Bashaw, in his last campaign against the Muscovites, and he still continues to attend him as a member of the faculty,—a species of slavery to which the fervour of his zeal has condemned the Capuchin; it is true, it is a voluntary slavery, but on this account it cannot be less painful to a man of the merit and of the virtue of the friar. You commence as their physician, and you conclude by being their slave. Let that be as it may, certain it is, that, furnished with the letter with which the friar provided me, I thought of nothing further than my embarkation; a Greek vessel was ready to set sail for Scio;—at the recommendation of a friend I got on board this vessel, passage free.

I embarked on the 22nd of March, with my little provisions, resolved to fast with the Greeks and to observe as much austerity as they. They eat no fish, except on the Sabbath of the Palms, or on the day of the annunciation. Herbs and legumes are the only sustenance which the majority of the Greeks make use of. Shell fish is permitted them, and all such fish as have no blood, and attach themselves to rocks. The Greeks are so rigid in their abstinence from eggs, from butter, and from milk, that when sick, they prefer to die rather than violate their rules. They grant no dispensations, be the persons whom they may, or whatever be the reasons for requiring them. I must confess that this severity, although it be extravagant, elicited reflections of a painful nature on the audacity with which they outrage such institutes in Christendom at present.

Nothing inspires the Asiatics with more aversion for the church of Rome, than that relaxation of these lenten

laws into which they erroneously suppose she has encouraged us to fall. I did not wish to augment this ill-founded aversion, but if the Greeks were to see a religious like myself, as heedless of their rules as the laity of Europe, it would increase this antipathy a hundred fold ; and even as it was, despite the regularity with which I lived, many of my fellow travellers perused me with a jealous eye, incredulous of my fidelity, and attentive only to their prejudices. I invited a passenger to dine upon a little oil and rice, when a boy whose age was scarcely more than nine, who, to the best of my belief, was the son of a Greek priest, arrested my intended guest, and told him, with terror in his eyes, that I was a catholic, and that I eat flesh meat. We took care to disabuse the child, and this tended in some measure to rebuild my reputation.

We had excellent company on board ; a metropolitan was one of these, the mother of the Patriarch of Constantinople, and some of her relations who were going back to Scio, of which the dignitary is a native, and who had visited him to felicitate him upon his elevation. The crew were a worthy set of fellows, for the most part natives of the isles of Greece, and especially the isle of Pathmos. Some of the sailors had a little knowledge of Italian. I addressed myself to these in order to be informed upon certain points which are familiar to mariners, and with which I wished to be acquainted ; I fairly returned instruction for instruction, by insinuating some reflections on the subject of their everlasting welfare, and had I known the vulgar Greek, I should have been, I am certain, more successful, for the poor fellows were tractable and docile. We emerged

from the port of Constantinople with a very friendly wind ; assisted by the currents, we made considerable way in a very little time. We were quickly passing by the coasts of Thrace, and our sailors who knew every thing that came in sight, told me the names of the places that presented themselves. With the chart in one hand and the compass in the other, I discovered, with astonishment, much bad reckoning ; and is it not perfectly surprising, that vessels have made, and continue to make so many voyages in this vicinity, and that we yet remain destitute of anything approaching to exactitude. This circumstance put me out of temper with our geographers ; it was nothing throughout but towns omitted or misplaced ; to rectify these errors, I shall enter into certain geographical details which the reader may pass over if he consider them as tedious, but which are certainly more useful than matter more amusing.

At twelve French miles from the city of Stamboul, my attention was directed to Agios Stephanos. They shewed me Sicomesy at two miles farther on, at six miles lower down Milo is discerned, and six miles more remote the greater Sicomesy ; you subsequently pass Panagia, a place which is at three miles distance from the former. Penatis is seen at eight miles distance from Panagia. Selivri is equally distant from Penatis, from which Heraclea is removed but eighteen miles ; at the close of the evening we cast anchor within sight of this celebrated town, with the design of passing the night there. The situation of this city is exceedingly fine. Heraclea is erected on a little mountain which protrudes into the sea, and constitutes a cape. I was very solicitous of visiting the city, but the sea was so disturbed that it would have

been impossible to make the shore. I was under the necessity of remaining satisfied with simply the external aspect of the city. The Archbishop is one of the most considerable metropolitans in the Patriarchate of Constantinople ; he places the crown on the Patriarch's brow, as the bishop of Ostia places the tiara on his Holiness.

We set sail the succeeding day, after the sun had risen, and made ninety miles in eight hours. The first place of notoriety that we caught sight of on the coast, was Rhedeste or Rhodosto, forty miles from Heraclea ; seven miles from thence we caught sight of Suandarsi ; seven miles more and we came to Ganofano ; at the termination of the next three miles Mircophilo hove in sight ; after three miles sail Peristasi was before us ; and another three miles brought us to Panili ; then a long interval of six and twenty miles brought us to Gallipoli. All vessels, whatever, from Constantinople, are obliged to pause for a day before Gallipoli ; officers carefully visit them to ascertain whether there be fugitive slaves or contraband merchandise on board. A priest, a native of Scio, of the Latin ritual, is the consul of Venice In Gallipoli, he is entitled to a very trifling impost on each vessel that puts in, and if he had no other revenue the consul would certainly be very poor. He and his valet are the only catholic inhabitants of the city ; I knew him very intimately in Constantinople, he gave me the kindest possible reception, he even persuaded me to lodge at his residence ; having passed the night there, I had the happiness the succeeding morning of celebrating the sacrifice of mass. It is a consolation to be able to repair the outrages which Heaven receives at the hands of the unbelievers, by the celebration of the holy oblation, in places

to which it would seem that satan wishes to establish a prescriptive title. The city is of moderate dimensions, and the castle which defends it is not strong. The sea constitutes an estuary, which is far from being a perfect harbour, and the place in which the vessels anchor, is less a haven than a roadstead. The ruins of the city of Lampsacus rear their mouldering forms opposite Gallipoli; it is situated between Serakino, which lies nearer to Constantinople, and Pregaz, which lies nearer to the Dardanelles. There is little more than thirty miles between Gallipoli and the Dardanelles. Your vessel passes Mayto previously to coming to the first castles, of which the distance from the former is about five miles. Mayto is a village situated in Europe, which abounds in wine, a circumstance of much utility to vessels, which in passing back or forward, invariably put in there, for the purpose of procuring a supply. One must suffer the same visit at the Dardanelles, which is previously endured at Gallipoli. Finally set free from these importunate exactions, we took the open sea to cast anchor at Tenedos, where we remained at anchor the succeeding day, awaiting the subsidence of the wind which blew violent and strongly, and almost in our teeth. Thence we sailed to Metelin, the Lesbos of the ancients; this place is no longer what it was of old. Lesbos has ceased to be paramount in Troas, it no longer lords it over Eolidis; I cannot inform you as to whether it be fecund in fine geniuses or no, having been unable to put that question to the test. I can assure you, however, without fear of contradiction, that there is no Sappho in this island now, that no Alceus strikes his lyre in its precincts, that it now contains no learned Theophrastes to furnish commentaries on Aristotle and enrich it with his



writings. The muses are invariably amateurs of liberty, and seldom lift their voices for a subjugated people. Lesbos was the father-land of Pitticus, one of the seven sages of the Grecians. He lived a long time in the isle of Lesbos, and uniting valour to sagacity, aided in rescuing his country from the yoke of tyrants. The isle, which appeared to be extremely fertile, contains three hundred and sixty villages, and has three small ports, Navagia. Metelin, and Tokmak.

Metelin is a large village or a little town, destitute of circumvallation; the town is covered by a little mountain which advances its front into the sea, and constitutes a cape; on the summit of this mountain, a well built castle, the labour of the Genoese, when masters of the isle, elevates its lofty form and defends the village. We may call this mountain a peninsula, and the earth which unites it to the main land is covered with the houses which constitute the town. Having one on either side of its peninsula Metelin has two harbours, of which the one to the north is of very little use, from the absence of a cover; the haven to the south is sheltered from the winds, but having little water, is only fit for gallies—vessels of great draught cannot penetrate the bay. Some of the inhabitants are Turks while some of them are Christians; the latter, whose ritual is Greek, outnumber the Mahomedans. As the space which intervenes between Constantinople and Metelin is small, and as the gallies of the Grand Signior frequently bear up and cast anchor in the roadstead, pirates seldom trouble its repose, and the Turks, who can live with less terror here than elsewhere, only multiply too rapidly in Metelin. A metropolitan resides in Metelin, and a bishop in Molino.

We passed three days in this place, for the wind, which was blowing in a contrary direction, prevented our departure; it ultimately altered, and many barques and saiques were to be seen spreading their sails upon their yards, and taking the favourable winds, and preparing to quit the harbour; but the pilot of the petty bark in which I should tempt the deep, was unwilling to set sail until the ensuing day, and yet he was unwilling that I should go on board any other vessel, I could not well divine his reason, for paying him nothing, as I did, I could not possibly imagine what use I could be to him; however, he removed my doubts; he told me that he was fully persuaded that if he happened to encounter christian pirates, I would save him from their insults, at least, I would save his vessel, he assured me; not wishing to indulge this chimerical idea; as it was Saturday evening, and as I was solicitous of being in Scio the succeeding morning, for the purpose of celebrating mass, I entered a saique which was quitting the harbour, the mariners of which, who were my only company, were natives of Pathmos, returning to their isle. I was very badly recompensed for my hurry; the pains I took to hasten my departure, cost me very dear.

The wind which continued in our stern was exceeding strong, but not having been able to distinguish the canal which separates Scio from the main land, though the wind was fair for entering the channel, our pilot, as the night was fast approaching, by standing somewhat sea-ward, steered by mistake along the outside of the isle, and it was only when the sun had risen and the darkness was dispersed, and when it was impossible to retrace his course, that his error became manifest. Compelled by

the energy of the wind, we were forced to continue on the same tack, and our only resource was to seek some inlet in which we might find some shelter from the wind. Driven by stress of weather, we ultimately ran our bark into a creek; here I recalled and sought to practice the precept of Pittacus the wise man of Metelin. We must make use of every possible precaution to ward off vexatious accidents, but, if they descend on us, said Pittacus, we must bear them with equanimity. Having disembarked, we ascended, by means of rocks which were nearly perpendicular, to the summits of some neighbouring heights, in order to discover if no house were within sight, or no sign of human habitation on this desert coast, but alas! mountains towering above mountains, precipices heaped on top of precipices, were all that met the eye in this desolate place, turn to what side you would. We now sought some rocky fountain, some crystal well which we hoped to find, sparkling, pure, and embosomed in the rocks, from which to quench our thirst during the time that heaven should retain us in this howling wilderness, but in vain. With the utmost exertion of the powers of vision, we could not discern a solitary tree, whose shade might prove a refuge from the fervour of the sun, whose overpowering radiance was intolerable. Heaven eventually blessed our researches, for I was so happy as to succeed in discovering a spacious cave, in which I had as much shadow as I pleased, and a little more coolness than was quite desirable.

What gave us most uneasiness, was, that the wind appeared to be a perfect trade wind, it blew so constantly in

one direction. Meantime our stock of water began to fail, and I found it necessary to reiterate a request for a draught, repeatedly before my wishes would be complied with. After all, the fear of Corsairs caused our sailors more inquietude, than any other evil, imaginary or real. They were fully persuaded that if the pirates spied us, they would bear down upon us instantaneously and plunder our vessel, if they did no worse: imagine for a moment our miserable destiny! We should certainly have died of thirst and hunger, in this melancholy solitude. Our prospects were anything at all but pleasing. I learned to appreciate the merit of St. Francis Xavier, and of his devoted imitators, who breathed their last in deserts, such as this, without repining. But frightful as my present situation was, it was far from being so dismal as the destitution in which they expired. I patiently submitted to the will of heaven, but I confess that I was unable to extract that sweetness from my present situation, which sages have discerned in utter loneliness, and though, with the assistance of the Lord, I calmly prepared myself for such encounters with calamity as he should please to appoint, it was not without a certain struggle with natural repugnances, whose existence I confess with shame.

We spent three whole days in this painful situation; ultimately a wind arose at midnight, which was very weak, it is true, but which was sufficient to deliver us from this sad sojourn, in which we had spent three melancholy days, and to cause us with inflated sail, to cut the rippling ocean, for the isle of Samos—our pilot's house and

business lay in Samos, and thither he was fully resolved to steer, without putting himself to the slightest pain, as to whether his passenger, whom he had pledged himself to land in Scio, should ever reach that isle or no ; it was a flagrant violation of good faith, but then the Greeks are famous for mendacity. During the voyage, I perceived, with no inconsiderable interest, the excessive terror entertained by these poor people for corsairs ; though our vessel was perfectly alone upon the open sea, they did not dare to speak a word above their breath, but observed, and made their passenger observe, as profound a silence, as if the enemy was at their elbow ; when it was indispensably necessary to speak, it was always in a low whispering tone, with many apprehensive looks over their shoulder, as if fearful that some bearded desperado was within ear shot. Though I was myself as largely endowed with the gift of cowardice, as these most veracious mariners, I could scarce refrain at first from laughter, at the panic terror that oppressed them in the open sea, in the utter absence of an enemy, as well as at the species of comedy it caused them to enact, but I became in time reconciled to it, and seemed to consider it a thing of course.

We continued all this time to coast the isle of Scio, and I prayed to heaven to inspire our pilot with honesty enough to keep his word, and to land me in the town, or in some place adjacent, from which we might easily transport ourselves to the place to which we had designed to go. At one time my wishes, I conceived, were heard, for a stiff breeze sprung up, which compelled our pilot to near the coast of Scio ; this wind which gave me so much plea-



sure died away unhappily, and, after a calm of half an hour's duration, during which our pilot regarded every point in the horizon for the expected breeze, a wind which was friendly to the rogue sprang up in spite of all my prayers, and growing stronger by degrees, wafted the Greek vessel towards Samos, where she ran into a wretched haven, in which there was not a single habitation to be seen. We could perceive the island of Icaria from thence; we had a whole day's leisure to consider it, as the sea was so much agitated that we could not disembark. Taking my little baggage the succeeding day, I dragged myself as well as I could to the adjacent village. I was told by the natives that this hamlet was a port, it is certainly one of a peculiar species if it be, for the ocean forms no inlet in the land. They hawl their boats upon a shore, (which cannot be said to be indented) for they are apprehensive that if they left them in the sea in such a miserable road, the pirates would deprive them of these vessels.

I met with an Albanian captain, who intended to depart with the first good wind;—hoping we should have it the succeeding day, I spent little time in looking for a lodging, but first having stowed away my baggage in the bark which was lying high and dry upon the sand, I considered it expedient to pass the night within its hollow womb; you will easily imagine that it did not take much time to make my bed, and truth to tell, when the bed was made, it was very far from commodious. As the wind continued the succeeding day blowing constantly in the same direction, I entered a village called *Carlovazi*, to procure a lodging in the hamlet, or at least, some bread

but, unhappily for me, I could find neither one nor the other, nor for love nor for money ; it even cost me no small trouble to discover my Albanian. At length with much ado, I succeeded in unearthing this ingenious person, when I proceeded to acquaint him with the utter destitution to which I was reduced. He directed me to one of his acquaintances, at whose house I contrived to make a slight repast, after which I found it imperative on me to return to my vessel, in which I passed the three succeeding days and nights. At the termination of this period, when you might expect that I was beginning to warm to my new abode, I found my naval domicile perfectly intolerable, and I began to be afflicted with a species of illness which might be attended with frightful consequences. On Sunday, after mass, I made such strenuous exertions, that they succeeded in hiring me a small apartment at a very costly rate, while an aged Sunamite volunteered to preside over and manage my kitchen ; this was a situation which required neither much labour nor much professional skill, on the part of the incumbent ; all that was ever wanted in this very humble kitchen was to cook a little rice mingled with oil, with now and then a little mallows.

During my sojourn in Carlovazi, I became acquainted with a caloyer, or religious of a Greek monastery, who was an Italian, from the city of Bologna. After having served in the Venetian army, he happened to get married in the town of Carlovazi, and when his wife, a female of the village, expired, he assumed the cowl in the monastery of Athos, from which he had recently emerged, to take care of a child which his marriage had bequeathed him. We met almost every evening. The culture of a

garden afforded him a livelihood : he brought me now and then a little salad as an offering. This monk was a man of much simplicity, and I was pleased to find him destitute of craft, as it enabled me to ascertain certain facts with which I wished to be acquainted. I had time enough to interrogate him, for the wind delayed our departure for fifteen days.

Though I was by no means at my ease in the position which I endeavour to describe, my reflections were not wholly engrossed by my own reverses : I was grieved to see the melancholy situation of our passengers to Pathmos. Fifteen leagues was the space that separated them from their destination ; but they were entirely destitute of the means of transport—their patience and resignation to the will of God were admirable. I was highly edified at so much virtue ; 'twas a lesson which I studied in my solitude, and by which I endeavoured to profit.

They pressed me, very anxiously, to go with them to their isle. I should see, they assured me, many things in Patmos which were worthy of attention ; for instance, the grotto or cave in which the Apocalypse was written by St. John. I should have been delighted to visit so respectable a monument, if the transit had not been so utterly impossible. But, excepting this cave and a monastery of Caloyers, there is nothing to be seen in reality in Pathmos ; for Pathmos is only an enormous rock, inhabited by these Cenobites, and some Christian families. The soil is exceedingly ungrateful : nothing whatever that supports human life is produced by the barren rock. The natives go over to the mainland to procure the commonest supplies : they frequently engage as mariners on board ship, and on returning to the island, they bring

with them wherewithal to live. My fellow-passengers were persons of this description.

These worthy people bitterly complained of the Christian corsairs, who, without any respect for a place so sacred, which was consecrated, in some measure, by the sojourn of an evangelist, had devastated the island more than once, not sparing the very altars, and treating as well the religious as the laity with the most barbarous cruelty. They met with an additional misfortune in Samos ; having hired a bark to carry them to Pathmos, an incident occurred which prevented their departure : the corsairs, whom they had seen so often in imagination, finally appeared in downright reality ; descending on a neighbouring town, which was only three leagues distant from the village in which we resided, the freebooters swept away every thing, even the women were not left behind, whom, having previously dishonoured, they kept in durance vile, with many menaces of perpetual expatriation, unless they were ransomed to a considerable amount. This melancholy adventure caused me to be honored by a deputation of the most considerable inhabitants of our village ; they imagined that my character would give me some authority, and that by speaking to the monsters I might deliver these Christian damsels from captivity. As it was a work of charity, I willingly consented, but I first endeavoured to impress the difficulties of such a negociation upon the minds of my constituents ; I could not answer for the success of such an embassy ; I told them as the captain was an Italian, while I was a native of France, that the majority of these adventurers were Maïnotes, a licentious Christian people inhabiting the Morea, over whom their very chief had

little authority, that failing as they did to fear God, that they should respect his minister was hardly possible; that I was ready to depart nevertheless, that after all they might not be quite such impracticable persons as I thought, and that perhaps the Lord who holds the hearts of human beings in his hands, might give a benediction to my humble words. Satisfied with this response, they retired to consider as to what was most expedient. They were still deliberating, when a messenger arrived, panting and exhausted to inform them, that after having ruined the village, the pirates had sagaciously debarked their female prisoners, and that having plundered every thing worth pillaging, and landed their living cargo, and fairly run away from them, they had directed their adventurous barks seaward on another cruise in search of some place where they might likewise do evil. The unexpected retreat of the marauders, I doubt not, delivered me from a disgraceful interview by stripping me of the character of an ambassador. Perhaps you are anxious to know how I occupied my time in this sequestered place during the fortnight that I spent here. Unacquainted as I was with the language of the country, and therefore unable to exercise my ministry, I passed the live long day in communion with St. Paul, whose divine epistles I perused; and when evening came and my caloyer came along with it, I conversed a considerable time with this native of Italy, who informed me of many facts, which I listened to with interest. 'Twas from him that I learned the situation in which Samos exists at present. The city which was known to the ancients by this name, and which was in former times the metropolis of the isle, is designated now *Megali Khora*, it stands upon the margin of



the sea, upon the island's orient shore. Here the metropolitan has his seat, and here resides the Turkish aga, who is commissioned to collect the dues of the Grand Signior. Marato Cavo is situated on its northern side, while Carlovazi, Vathi, and Necori, are discerned in the western quarter; all these places lie upon the coast. The inland places are Platano, Castagne, Arvanito, Cora and Fora. The mountains are inhabited by a colony of Albanians, who took refuge in these fastnesses about a century ago, but I could not ascertain the occasion of their flight. They are a pastoral people, and obtain their subsistence by rearing flocks, very nearly in the manner of the Arabs.

In this island money is extremely rare, and when the Turk has once extracted 15,000 crowns, as he annually and unfailingly does, there is scarce a halfpenny to be seen throughout the isle; meanwhile the quality of the soil, unlike that of the isle of Pathmos, is far from sterility. The fertility of Samos caused it to be an object of envy in ancient times, and attracted the armaments of various people, who sought to make themselves the masters of Samos. Its abundance gave rise to a proverb, which Strabo mentions, to the effect that the hens gave milk in Samos. The inhabitants invariably convert the larger section of their farms into vineyards, as the Mahomedans levy no taxes upon vines, besides which they permit vineyards to descend to Christian heirs: such is not the case with ordinary farm lands; excluding the enormous contributions which they annually derive from such lands, if the Christian, whose property they happen to be, have no male heirs when he relinquishes the world, the Turks take possession of his holding, and sell it to

any one that pleases them.\* You will doubtless ask me, why the Mahomedans make this difference between vineyards and ordinary farm lands ; that holy horror which the Mahomedans who first possessed themselves of Samos, entertained for wine, is the origin of this difference ; they considered the lands upon which grapes were grown as accursed, and this prejudice has descended to their posterity : the Aborigines think otherwise, they esteem an abundant vintage as the greatest of all temporal benedictions. Either the soil or the pursuits of the natives have suffered an extraordinary change since the time of Strabo, since he informs us that, in his days, Samos was unfortunate in wine, while the circumjacent islands were prolific of the grape. *Ex vino infelix est cum cæteræ circumvicinæ vino optimo abundant.* All the revenue which the islanders possess, is derived from wine ; they dispose of it in Scio and especially in Smyrna, where European vessels purchase many cargoes. The colour of their wine is deep, and it bears water well, but its flavour is not delicate. The rector of the village in which I resided treated me to some of a superior quality, but this excellent wine is rare. In France, they sell it for the wine of Scio, and our gourmands are sometimes the victims of the fraud. Their wine and a little silk constitute the commerce of the isle ; the corn, oil, and other necessaries which the isle produces, are only sufficient for the home consumption ; I was likewise informed, if I remember rightly, that wood for the construction of

\* Nothing is so characteristic of a nation as its laws ; under similar circumstances barbarians always make the same enactments, the laws enacted by the English “ to check the growth of Popery ” and those of the Mahomedans to extinguish Christianity, are identically the same.

saiques and barks was exported from Samos ; this may really be the case, for you see the mountains covered with the finest trees, and such as are well calculated for such architecture.

I have told you already that Samos is inhabited solely by Christians. Their ritual is Greek and they are all great fasters. They get through the lent with a few legumes. They do not use the liberty which other Greeks enjoy, that of seasoning these legumes with a little oil ; they only use their oil on Saturdays and Sundays, which are privileged days, when it is prohibited to fast. They are guided by a metropolitan whose revenue, which scarcely amounts to two hundred crowns, consists for the most only in voluntary offerings ; he annually receives five sous from every family, and the patriarch as many more : ten additional sous satisfy the other claims of the church, whether poor or rich they all owe the same sum, and no one can evade this obligation. As in every other district in the patriarchate, priests who are married cannot hear confessions, unless in the very greatest emergencies. This function is confided by the bishops only to certain Cenobites, who visit the hamlets and sequestered houses, who hear the confessions of such are desirous of approaching the tribunal of penance. Confessions are exceeding rare except upon these solemn festivals, from the absence of the spiritual father, as they term the confessor, and perhaps I may add from the absence of devotion.

One thing is worthy of compassion, which is the love these poor Greeks entertain for their religion, but unfortunately few of them observe the precepts of their faith, and nobody at all attains perfection. I went to their

churches on the sabbath days and festivals to exhort them by example, as I could not preach to them verbally. The excess of their irreverence is inconceivable : their prayers are a profanation of the house of God, rather than acts of piety ; they chatter, laugh and sing, and, what is still more scandalous, their priests may be seen in these irreverent groups, indulging their hilarity as gracelessly as the rest. You scarce can see a sign of souls which are truly touched by heaven, or which are influenced by a sense of the nature of the sacred mysteries at which they assist ; notwithstanding this they call them, like ourselves, tremendous mysteries, while they treat them with profound indignity ; their conduct is an absolute enigma, full of inconsistencies and incongruities ; they desecrate the churches and revere them, they are seldom seen to pass before the temples without profound inclinations of the person, the recitation of a prayer and several signings of the cross ; and such is their devotion that they sometimes kiss the stones, and to these external tokens of respect an especial benediction, they imagine, is attached. The number of their monasteries amounts to five ; of the two dedicated to the Virgin Mary, one is called *Panagia Megala* ; three are dedicated to the honour of the cross, to St. George ; and to Elias, viz., *Stauros*, *Age Elias*, *Age Georgies*. The religious, to say the very least of them, are quite as much addicted to the culture of the earth as to their spiritual interests ; it would be well if their minds were cultivated like their farms. Science, whether sacred or profane, is carefully excluded from the cloister, and that not only in this isle but throughout Asia, where well informed persons are extremely rare, and where the desire of information is

equally unusual. For my part, I was considered as an excommunicated wretch, or one who richly merited excommunication. As they never have an opportunity of seeing us, they really take us for the monsters which the monks describe, and they implicitly believe in all their calammies. Though well aware that I was a religious, and though living in the penitential time of lent, nothing could persuade them that I kept the fast: they had been previously informed that in lent, meat and eggs were eaten by the French; luckily for me, the rector's lady asked of me an ointment to cure a burned child, I gave her the ointment and the child got well. In gratitude, the lady presented me with eggs; my refusing to receive them excited her astonishment. She was edified at finding that I would not eat them, but much more edified to learn that charity induced me to do her such a service. Disinterestedness is such a novelty, that it makes a profound impression on their minds, when the natives of the Levant happen to encounter it.

This pretendedly-heroic action did me the utmost honour in the village. Their prejudice began to wear away, but on the other hand I found my situation so extremely irksome, I began to be disgusted with it. I should have found sufficient occupation had I known the vulgar Greek a little better, so as to give instructions to the people, but I could scarcely utter three consecutive words. To have ears and not to hear, to have the organs of speech and yet be silent, is a situation of exceeding pain, the misery of which I have learned from experience. I had no resource but my solitary monk, but he passed all the day in the labours of the garden. But when he returned at the twilight hour, I made



amends for the compulsory silence which I had observed all day by asking an infinity of questions. Amongst other interrogatories I enquired whether, when embracing the ritual of the Greeks preparatory to his marrying a female of the country, he had been asked to abjure the religion of the Catholics? whether they had baptised or confirmed him a second time? He assured me that nothing of the sort had ever been proposed to him when he had got married in the isle of Samos, or when he had assumed the cowl in Athos, and he added, "if it were proposed I should never have consented." I wished to become acquainted with the state of Athos, which the Greeks denominate the holy mountain, or *Agion Oros*. He satisfied my curiosity in this regard. I confess that, previously to quitting France, I had read many narratives relating to this subject, but never had met any thing so copious in details as was the Caloyer's account; and such was the Cenobite's ingenuous simplicity, that no one could suspect him of insincerity.

Mount Athos is the famous mountain which Xerxes, king of Persia separated from the mainland by a straight which was fifteen hundred paces in extent, if Pliny may be credited. And such is the vast elevation of this mountain, that according to the same authority, in the summer solstice, its shadow falls upon the isle of Lemnos, of which the distance from Athos is eighty-seven miles. In reality, its altitude, as Father Loredano informed Riccioli, after having exactly measured it, is ten thousand paces in Italian measure. It elevates its summit above the clouds and winds; no storm disturbs that region of serenity, insomuch that the letters which are traced upon the sand or ashes which lie upon its apex,

are found years subsequently perfectly unaltered and unchanged. I did not learn this from the Caloyer ; let me tell you—he had never had the curiosity to make experiments of this description. This mountain, or more accurately still, this chain of mountains, which composes a peninsula, which unites Macedonia and the sea, is inhabited by an entire nation of Greek religious. They had four and twenty monasteries upon it in former days, two of which are ruined, while twenty-two remain. The offices recited are of such excessive length, and the rigour of their fasts is so extreme, that their life may be considered as exceedingly austere.

The three first days of lent are passed by the monastics with scarcely any food and with scarcely any drink, viz. the Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday of the Quinquagesima. The kitchen, the coffer, the refectory, all are shut ; it is only at three o'clock on Wednesday that the monastics break their fast. The Caloyer confessed that all were not equally austere, that some laid up a store of victuals in their cells, with which they refreshed themselves during these three days. On the three last days of lent they are almost equally abstemious, and after having eaten upon Holy Thursday, 'tis Saturday evening when they eat again. Wasted by the fast of the preceding lent, and bound, as they are, to remain longer in the choir, this conclusion of the penitential season is felt more severely than its commencement. Neither oil nor wine are permitted to be taken during any time in lent. In every week of the year, as well as during lent, Monday, Wednesday, and Friday are fast days, except, perhaps, in that paschal time that finishes at Pentecost. These are fasts which

their rule ordains, and however rigorous they may be, there are monks who are still more mortified than the rule requires. It is astonishing to see them support a life of such extreme austerity, even to the decrepitude of extreme old age. Summon up the memory of all that they suffer in La Trappe. In La Trappe there is nothing which is equivalent to this; the climate, I think, and the temperament of the inhabitants, and habit likewise, must necessarily have a share in producing such phenomena. Alas, how much merit goes to loss, how many virtues are destroyed by the spirit of error and of schism!

The superiors of these monasteries are elective, the chapter chooses new ones every year: 'tis true, an authority of short duration which is always on the verge of expiring can seldom be an object of respect, but the Caloyer in power enforces his authority with so much vigour, and punishes delinquents so severely, that he uniformly causes himself to be obeyed. None but grievous faults are punished with imprisonment, but penance is inflicted for the slightest faults, and a penance too, which is certainly extraordinary. Laid upon his belly and his feet stripped bare, the person to be punished is beaten on his soles, on which many heavy blows are inflicted with a cudgel, and if he be mutinous and wishes to escape, the rebel is delivered to the secular authority, that is, he is given to the Turkish Aga, who instantaneously executes excellent justice by the hands of officials, whose experience and ability in handling the baton are perfectly unparalleled—monastic discipline is thus maintained with admirable order. The method, too, is most compendious, no chapter is called, no processes

are necessary, no sentence is pronounced, such formalities, in fact, are totally ignored.

Sent by the Porte, and appointed by the Grand Signior, that tribute is levied by the Aga, which they annually wrench from these unfortunate monastics, and which is twenty thousand crowns a year in amount. It is not very long since this tribute first began, but my Caloyer could not tell me the occasion or the origin. He was well aware, however, of the energetic rigour with which the imposition was exacted, I can easily believe that this rigour is extreme—the Turks are, in fact, the most terrible of tax-gatherers. No people in the world are more interested. The following fact appears incredible, and yet its verity is incontestable. I have it from the best authority. Scio was the scene of the occurrence. Two Greeks appeared before the Cadi, a magistrate that may be considered as the mayor of Turkish cities. The documents and arguments which one of them possessed decided the question in his favour. He pleaded his cause with all the eloquence which the consciousness of right, and the feeling of self-interest can bestow on a declaimer. The assistants looked one another in the face, with glances which seemed to say the question was decided, and that justice was clearly on the side of the declaimer. The plaintiff, however, ultimately ceased, when the defendant came forward with a certain swagger, and persons looked with wonder on the triumph in his eye, he did not care a maravedi for the logic of his enemy; this defendant, coming forward, had nothing in his hand but a certain piece of paper on which nothing was inscribed, but then, many golden coins were enveloped in this paper. Without losing any time in unnecessary

eloquence, he went instantaneously to work. Presenting the Cadi with the paper full of gold, Signior, said he, all that my adversary says is false, this is the evidence that proves it ; my lord these are my witnesses, examine them yourself. The magistrate receives the paper, he developes it upon the bench : counting the coin into the hollow of his hand, he turns to the plaintiff. My friend, he exclaims, your arguments are excellent ; your adversary, however, has got forty witnesses which give evidence against you, and I must of necessity decide against you unless you furnish witnesses as many and as good. The plaintiff was equally unwilling and unable to comply with the wishes of the judge, and the forty sequins triumphed over justice. You must pardon this digression. I intend to go back and converse with the Caloyer about the Aga, who compels the Cenobites to pay a tribute, and from whose iron gripe nothing can extricate them. They agree to give him so much food and silver every week, and his protection can be purchased at no other price. In order to support these multiplied expences, certain of the friars are sent upon the quest, not only to the isles of Greece, but to Constantinople and to Muscovy. The persons selected for this mission are the most intelligent, they are the persons possessed of the easiest address. But these missions are the ruin of monastic discipline. Intercourse with seculars is dangerous to monks, and purity of mind, that virgin flower which only flourishes in solitude, is injured by removal, is tarnished by exposure ; full of what they have seen in that illusive theatre, the world, they are seldom such Caloyers on re-entering their cell, as they were when they stooped beneath its lintel for



departure. They willingly confess that it does them an injury, and necessity, we know, is the cause of this exposure to the miseries and dangers which follow in the train of mental dissipation. When the brothers, who are questers, succeed in their vocation, they look upon themselves as necessary persons, they appreciate their own importance, and overbearing to their brethren and saucy to superiors, are managed by caresses and fondled out of interest.

When Cenobites are poor, they cannot keep their vow of poverty ; failing to furnish him with certain articles the community, of course, must allow the individual to gather money from his own resources to purchase raiment and many things besides. The house in which he dies inherits what he hoards. The monastery becomes his heir. Individuals have left a thousand crowns and double the amount in many instances, which the procurator never fails to seize on the moment he is dead, in the name of the community. The men who leave the largest legacies are such as possess a piece of land which is rented from the monastery, and of which they are proprietors for life, of which they are permitted to appropriate the produce, only subtracting the sum which the monastery requires.

You do not see among these Greek religious that perfect uniformity which is so exceedingly desirable in such societies. Such as give money to the monastery on entering religion, may live precisely as they please. They are not obliged to conform to the regular observances with the same severity as those who had been poor. They procure dispensations from assisting at the offices, above all, when the offices are long, with great

facility ; in a word, they give themselves liberties and relaxations which would not be permitted to the others, and it would seem as if their epithet of benefactor, which is derived from the donation they have given, prevents the spiritual benefit which should accrue from their secluded situation. These exemptions, I suspect, are not ratified by heaven. In this order, on Mount Athos, there are artizans of all descriptions, to whom their brethren repair to purchase whatever they require. The artizans are generally outside the monasteries—they occupy the place where the Aga has his dwelling, there they have their shops, and there these mechanics have a market twice a-week. As in Christian countries the monasteries have bells, they obtain this permission with facility ; in every imaginable instance the Turks are the most accommodating of mankind, if you second your petition with a bribe. Our European travellers, who love exaggerations, for even amongst travellers there are characters of this kind ! increase these religious to the number of twelve thousand. I took them on their word ; my Caloyer, however, who was well informed, entirely undeceived me. The Cenobites of Athos are not half so numerous, and three or four thousand are their utmost number, which is exceedingly considerable, as two, hundred in a monastery make a large community.

These formidable, nay, these indefatigable fasters are far from being the humblest of the human kind ; when their blood is up, their eyes flash fire at the slightest contradiction, and they overwhelm one another absolutely with imprecations, a bad harvest to you, or may you be anathéma ! Such are their ordinary salutations when malignity inspires them. At times the questers, accord-

ing to my monk's account, give rise to scandals in their expeditions, by shameful weaknesses, and in order to escape the rigorous chastisements which would inevitably follow such public derelictions, they reduce their brethren to bankruptcy, they apostatise and fly to foreign lands. Scenes like this, the Caloyer continued, are never to be seen in Monte Santo ; they take infallible measures to prevent such lapses in the holy mountain, where a female foot has never pressed the sward. He was not sufficiently intimate with architecture to give me a good description of the churches, however he knew his religion very well, and 'twas that which interested me the most. I exhibited a project which our fathers had conceived—they wished to establish themselves in Monte Santo, to keep a school said I to the Caloyer, and to teach theology and written Greek, to educate Caloyers in the principles of Rome, who, when risen to authority, would vindicate the truth. Nought could be more efficacious for eradicating schism, answered the Caloyer. They follow the opinions of their pastors here with blind credulity. Their papas, he continued, and especially their monks whose words derive weight from their austerities, and the frightful macerations of the flesh which they observe, confer credit on erroneous doctrine. People are unwilling to believe that men who live so well can think so badly. If Monte Santo were subdued, the spiritual conquest of the whole of Greece would doubtless follow as a consequence. The project, I admit, is admirable, in the execution is the difficulty, for the missionaries entrusted with the execution should be quite as formidable fasters as the Greeks, a faculty, indeed, of very rare occurrence. Oh, that is no impediment said I to

the Caloyer ; our fathers in the missions of Malabar live like the penitents of India, hunger has no horror for a man who is truly apostolic, his zeal can conquer his reluctant nature, making him all things to all men. Permitting that to pass, continued my Caloyer, can you conquer the aversion which the Greeks have for you? You cannot well imagine the excess to which it rises, and how malignant are the glances with which you are regarded. The Greeks have a book which they call the Monocanons, it is their only casuist, and it appears to be to them a second gospel. They forbid the laity to read this book, in order to make it more respectable, and its contents are only learned through the medium of the clergy. I have had a copy in my hands, I chanced upon a chapter whose title was as follows, Πέρὶ τῶν Φραγκῶν καὶ Λατινῶν, that is, “concerning the Latins and the Franks.” I perused the chapter with exceeding interest, its substance is indelibly imprinted in my memory. It described us as inhuman wolves, which is the gentlest epithet the author gives us. He propounds, as a leading principle, that those who recognise the pope’s supremacy have been excluded from the church of Christ as well as from apostolical tradition, living like barbarians without any law—these are his very words. Excluding the common accusation of adding to the *Credo* that the third person in the Trinity proceeds from the Father and the Son, of using unleavened bread upon our altars, he says that our Saviour consecrated leavened bread, and having given some to Judas ; Iscariot went out, and, repairing to the Jews, exhibited the bread. Thus they justify the traitor and condemn our blessed Lord, as one who violated the Mosaic institution. It accuses the Catholics

as guilty of Nestorianism, in never calling Mary mother of God, of giving her the epithet of Holy Mary, and refusing her a higher title. We fast upon Saturdays according to this author, and when Christmas-day falls upon a Saturday, such is our respect for Saturday, that we fast upon this feast of the nativity. He accuses us of failing to commence the Quarantania till Wednesdays of the Quinquagesima, and of not singing alleluia in lent, of not anointing sinners previously to giving them communion, of refusing to take subjects from the martyrology for pictorial embellishments of churches; thus painting nothing but the figure of the cross, of shaving our priests and not suffering them to marry. There were other accusations in this portion of the volume, but the copy which I had was injured here—I have never learned the remainder. I confess that this book appeared a novelty to me. It surprises me to think that the learned Allatius, who has written treatises of so much beauty on the heresies contained in the writings of the Greeks, should say nothing of the Monocanons. He had not discovered this impoisoned fountain, perhaps, with the virus of which all the Greeks are imbued. With prejudices such as these, continued my caloyer, think you that the monks will ever listen to you. I answered that the obstacle was not invincible, established amongst and living in the midst of them, we should demonstrate the falsehood of these suppositions, the injustice of these accusations. 'Twould be totally in vain! continued my caloyer, in vain would you endeavour, by irrefragible reasons, to overturn practices so ancient and so cherished. In vain would you press them for an answer to your arguments. They would treat you to an apothegm in



place of a reply, viz. our law enjoins what you object to. They attach themselves to this with unconquerable obstinacy. I heard from veteran caloyers, that one of your society and Rhodino, a native of the isle of Cyprus, made a similar attempt to the one which you describe. They met them with these propositions. Our young caloyers become learned, would despise the old and ignorant. Enamoured of their studies, they would never dig the ground nor stoop to servile toils. Ambition would inflame their youthful hearts; relinquishing their cells, they would go into the world for the purpose of becoming bishops, envy would insinuate itself amongst them, the brothers occupied in the labours of the field would be jealous of the ease in which the scholars lived.

There was much plausibility in these objections, and I thought I recognised, in such replies, the spirit and the style of irregular communities, where the naissant merit of the young caloyer is invariably repressed by ignorance in power, lest contempt should be followed by the loss of its authority. They also added upon this occasion, continued the caloyer, that did they give admission to religious Franks, 'twould render them suspicious to the Grand Signior, and embroil them with the Czars of Muscovy, whose protection 'twas their interest to cultivate. These replies shut the mouths of the projectors, and the project came to nought.

‘Have they got no object of inferior veneration, no relic or image of particular esteem?’ “Yes, an image of our lady, which, according to tradition, the image-breakers flung into the sea: which was borne by the ocean from Constantinople, and hurried by the surge into the neighbourhood of Athos, when Gabriel, an Eremite,

conveyed it to the church. Besides they keep the head, in the monastery of Laura, of the venerated Michael of Smnaze. This head has got the faculty, the schismatics declare, of banishing those scourges of the vineyard, and the farm caterpillars, locusts, &c. When the islanders of Rhodes were afflicted by the locusts, they sent a solemn deputation to request the head; having bore the borrowed relic in procession round their lands, the locusts disappeared to the wonder of the Mussulmans. The Waiwode of Wallachia made a similar request, which was followed by a similar phenomenon. He gave money to the monastery to elevate a church in honor of this Thaumaturgus. This is all that I could draw from my amiable caloyer, and of this I do assure you I was getting very weary.

You may wish to learn something of those famous vases, which, on the festivals of princes, and the altars of the gods, gave celebrity to Samos in anterior times. The argillaceous substance is no longer found in Samos, to which the classic hand of genius gave such peerless forms. The potter's wheel is broken in the isle of Samos, they no longer make a vessel of the coarsest clay. The natives of this island who were in the Dardanelles, brought vessels for their friends and even for to trade in, and were there potteries in Samos such provision would be vain. Certain ancient inscriptions are discovered in the isle, and some relics of a temple which the Argonauts erected to the goddess Juno. This queen of the deities of fable, as nobody can fail to know, not only was a native of the isle of Samos, but was wedded there to Jupiter, where oblations in her honor were more frequent than elsewhere. Poetry has celebrated Samos. 'Twas

here that Bacchus slew the Amazons, who, flying from Ephesus, sought a refuge in the isle. In Samos, Poly-crates reigned, said to be the happiest of human kind. He bragged of his felicity, he said he was superior to adverse fortune, and that the arrows of adversity could never reach him. He was taught the melancholy lesson, that full and perfect happiness is never an inhabitant of earth. He was imprisoned by a Persian satrap, who treated him with much cruelty, and caused him to be hung. The sovereign of Egypt seems to have foreseen these sad reverses. Hearing somebody describing this potentate's felicity—"Since his life is so felicitous, his death cannot be happy," said the prescient monarch. This island is respected as the birth-place of Pythagoras, as well of Creophilas by whom Homer was instructed.

We were fifteen days in Samos—the wind ultimately changed, and the mariners once more dragged their shallops down the beach. I was present at a ceremony to which I was a stranger. Priests approached the vessels on the margin of the sea, and bearing holy water, and with incense in their hands, they gave their benediction to these weather beaten boats. The priests were on the shore, the ceremony done, and the sun going down as the vessels took the wind. We durst not sail in daylight lest the pirates should perceive us. We made sail throughout the night, which was extremely wild and wintery. We reached the offing of a port in Scio, though the wind had veered. Our fathers, to whom I had been long announced, considered me as lost. Their joy upon beholding me was perfectly exstatic. Obligated to bid them farewell, I embarked on board a galley of the Grand Signior. 'Twas evening when I entered—I

was civilly received. The Turks always treat our missionaries so, when they pass from isle to isle, or from islands to the mainland. They always take us willingly on board their gallies; they shew us many marks of kindness, and give us unrestricted liberty in our efforts to inform and console the slaves. It was two, ante meridian, when our bark got under weigh, and at nine o'clock our sails were being furled before Smyrna. My coming had been previously announced by an epistle, and yet they were surprised to see me. My reception was the kindest you can well conceive.

On the 18th of April I entered Smyrna, where I was informed that a caravan was destined to depart for Aleppo on the thirteenth of May. I took advantage of the opportunity. There were certain residents of Smyrna, who were correspondents of my friends in Aleppo, who united me with some Armenian merchants to whom I was sedulously recommended; they could not have provided me with better company. They were amiable people, by whom civilities and services were lavished in the journey on your undeserving servant. They were natives of Erivan, in Persia, for the most part. I was surprised to see how cheaply they travel in the caravan: eight crowns was the money that the muletier received as the hire of his mule for four and thirty days. I, however, gave him ten, that he might take a little care of me. I remarked that this gratuity excited his affection. A hundred persons composed the caravan, but no one knew the languages with which I was acquainted. There was nothing heard on any side but Turkish and Armenian. I was compelled to be as silent as a Capuchin, though perfectly willing to be eloquent.

I began to apprehend that in former times I had verbally offended heaven, and that this was the penitence appointed me. Two or three Mahometans who understood the Arabic joined us in the journey; I found myself a little more at ease; I became acquainted with one of them; this companion of my way was very kind to me, he served me as a purchaser whenever I required it.

In life in a caravan there is great frugality; heated food is eaten only once a day—this good repast consists of half cooked rice, which is gilded with a little butter. When we get a bit of meat we boil it, and the water is made use of to prepare the rice: but this is considered as a sumptuous meal. The element we meet with in the desert springs is our ordinary beverage. We sleep upon the desert in the open air, as near as may be to some spring or river. A little carpet spread upon the ground and patience, and your mantle to shield you from the rain, constitute your bed and bedding. When we halted in the day time, in the ardour of the sun, I made me a pavilion with two carpets and a pole. Despite its inconvenience and my weakly constitution, I enjoyed excellent health in my journey to Aleppo.

We were brought to Puerbacha by the first day's march, which is only at six miles distance from the city we departed from. The transit was but short, it was but a preparation for our plunge into the desert. The caravan assembled here. Cranes were sitting on their nests, upon trees in the vicinity. This foolish-looking bird, looks ridiculously silly from the mode in which it sits, more without the nest than in it. Smiling as I looked upon these feathered simpletons, I felt my heart dilate as I stood beneath the tree, for I remembered the French proverb



I so often heard at home, and confessed, while looking upward, that the apothegm was true. Little birds came flying round these doltish cranes in cheerly congregations, screaming and chattering, and pecking at their nests, the size of which is great, and which are very well constructed of interwoven rods, though the builder looks so stupid. The attraction they discovered in these interwoven nests I could never well divine, but they seemed to be a source of inexhaustible amusement, producing the greatest possible hilarity among the little birds, while the crane seemed sadly at a loss to see the joke, but if utterly unable to participate in so much mirth, she offered not the slightest opposition to their pleasures.

Our march was only of eight hours upon the second day, and the caravan halted before noon-tide. Annually in spring it is the custom of the country to put the horses and mules to grass for a vernal month. The caravan conductors who travel during spring, being unwilling to deprive their cattle altogether of their right to graze, are accustomed to curtail their marches, in order that the creatures may have time to pasture ; and thus they avoid the expense of buying barley, with which they should be otherwise obliged to furnish them. Barley, I reiterate, as oats are rarely or never to be seen in this country, and the little that you meet with is destitute of grain. To-day we passed a little river, or rather a stream of considerable size, whose windings were innumerable ; the name of this river is the *Nif* : I took it for the Meander, however I was wrong.

We advanced two leagues, and called a halt upon our third day's march, and encamped in the vicinity of Dorgot. In this place we passed the remainder of the day, and

during the succeeding day we were likewise stationary here, waiting for some inhabitants of Thyatire, whose accession would increase our caravan. We did not want for grass, though no pasturage existed; as when the people of the town perceived us coming, they brought a sufficiency for sale. During this delay, I proceeded to the town of Dorgot for the purpose of procuring medals; they presented me with some which were destitute of value. And yet medals should be found, I feel persuaded, in these ruined countries of Asia Minor in considerable quantities. 'Twas the Peru of the pagan Romans, the proconsulship of which was bought with gold, as a very ready means to realise a fortune; the money and the medals of the ancient Romans were thus in constant currency in Asia Minor. Neither English or Venetians, nor learned men from France have come hither to inquire for the relics of antiquity: hence it is a virgin soil which cannot be explored in vain.

Mussulmen alone inhabit Dorgot, the Christians and the Jews are only passengers, whose object in visiting the town is purely commercial. Thus the Christians have no church, nor the Israelites a synagogue. The first, who are all of the Armenian rite, reside in one of those extensive buildings which are designated kans. They support a priest in this place, in order to possess his spiritual help in cases of necessity or death. They say their prayers in their apartments privately, as mass is never said for the Armenians except in consecrated churches, and in this place they do not keep the blessed sacrament. The sacrament is brought from Smyrna by a priest in the paschal season, as well as when viaticum is wanted for the dying. This distance is a source of many inconveniences

Many kindnesses were conferred on me by these worthy Armenians, I endeavoured to express my gratitude by the most eloquent gesticulations that my uninventive brain could possibly devise. I was delighted at their diligence in praying for the dead ; one of their priests the evening we arrived, assembled the most devotional for the purpose of praying in a churchyard, which was purchased from the Turks at a very costly rate, and whose possession is insured by a Kaatif Scherif of the Grand Signior, a title which is given to commandments which happen to be signed by that sovereign's hand.

A considerable town which is named Magnesia, in which the Pacha has his residence, stands at four leagues distance to the north of Dorgot, while about a league from its southren side is situated Thyatira, which now a days is called Ak Hissar.

In the Apocalypse the bishop of this city is upbraided with his weakness, in failing to reprimand with authoritative firmness the crimes and debauches of a certain jezebel. Lydia, that virtuous trafficker in purple, converted by St. Paul, was a native of this town. A merchant who had recently arrived from Thyatira, told me that the city was considerable still, but of moderate extent.

The caravan advanced to the celebrated city of Sardis, which was anciently the capital of Lydia, and the principal seat of the monarchy of Cræsus ; 'tis nothing but a village now. It appears from such relics as are undestroyed, that it was anciently a city of extraordinary grandeur, of vast extent and of unusual magnificence. I was fervidly desirous of visiting the ruins for the purpose of procuring medals, and to contemplate the relics

of departed splendour, and peruse the inscriptions, which are doubtless rare; the muleteers the masters now, felt the greatest possible desire on their side to drive their cattle to a plenteous pasture, which they were certain of discovering beside the stream, to gratify the palates of the brutes was a more important object than a scholar's curiosity.

The succeeding day we saw the town of Alla Sher upon our route; I shrewdly suspect that this town is a common and appointed rendezvous for all the cranes of the created universe; every window, wall and house top was covered with these birds. Having quitted Alla Sher or the ancient Philadelphia, we proceeded to the river Ghiades, which I took for the Meander, but in this I was mistaken, for the latter is now a days the Moindre: the water of the first is ill to drink, and it was worse than usual at this time, as myriads of locusts were lying in the stream, which after spreading desolation through the neighbouring country had rushed in the river and were drowned. These creatures would utterly destroy the country were it not for the providence of nature, which supplies an antidote for these destroyers so invincible to man and yet so mean: I have seen dark and gloomy clouds of them ere now, through which the sun could shine only with difficulty, as if his struggling light were labouring under an eclipse; riding through the air in terror. They consumed all the grass that year, and left the country brown and bare, all the leaves of the trees, even those of the olives were destroyed; millions came to being from their eggs and completed the destruction of whatever had been spared by their predecessors.

The antidote consists in a species of birds which come from the direction in which Persia lies, visiting the country from time to time, with a cry which is somewhat like the king-fishers ; they quickly put the locusts into great confusion, and passing through their hosts like cannon-balls, they swallow and digest them with astonishing celerity. Persons are despatched to a fountain in the country from which these birds migrate, who return with some of its pellucid water, and this vessel full of water is placed upon a hill near such oriental cities as Aleppo and Damascus. The birds always follow this beloved lymph, and remain near the city till the water is exhausted.

About five-and-twenty years ago, the locusts paid a visit to the city of Aleppo, whereupon the Turks obliged the Christians and Jews to join in a procession to avert the scourge. The Mahometans went first in the order of the march, carrying their Koran and intoning songs in a manner which resembled howling. The priests of Christianity succeeded, with the gospel, with relics, and the cross, praying in Armenian, Syriac, or Greek, and having copes upon their persons. The Hebrews were last, with their pentateuch, or tora, singing in a manner not remarkable for harmony. The choirs kept asunder to avoid cacophony. But this beautiful arrangement was totally disordered, for jealousy interfered to spoil the festival. In direct contradiction to our notions of processions, the Jews conceived the tail was not an honorable place. They yielded to the Turks with great good will, because, like the lion in the fable, they were strong ; but they deemed themselves insulted when put behind the Christians, and with the latter they forcibly endeavoured to exchange places. The Christians considered it their duty to pre-



serve their precedence. The Christians and the Jews were coming rapidly to blows, when the Mussulmans came down on the them, and fined them both, and compelled them to observe the first arrangement. They scarcely could anticipate a blessing from such piety. They confided in the water rather than in this procession; they sent persons to procure it, obtained it, stirred it, the birds appeared, and those winged destroyers rid them of the plague. These birds are denominated *zemarmars*. We ourselves had the pleasure of seeing them arrive in welcome flocks, but did not see their execution, inasmuch as it was evening when they came, and we departed before dawn.

We were traversing agreeable and fertile plains since ever we left Smyrna, but we entered upon mountains now where the roads were very difficult. We descended the succeeding day, into meadows which were finer still. I saw many Greek inscriptions as I passed, but our leaders went too rapidly to suffer me to read them: from the little I could see, I conceived them to be epitaphs. The ninth day brought us to a little mountain, whose sides and summit were enveloped by a wood, and the passage by whose foot was considered very dangerous. Caravans have frequently been plundered here. 'Tis known by the name of *Hamamelou bogaz*, which means the narrow passage of Hamamelou. Fire-arms were shouldered by the members of the caravan; the frequent fire of carbines accompanied our march, to let the robbers know, were there any within hearing, the folly of offending such warriors as we, and that we did not care a fig for them. The bearing of our caravan was gallant and audacious;

we did not shew the slightest sign of fear, for our number was two hundred, and they were only ten, according to report. After this bravado, we encamped beside a streamlet, honored, like the others, with the title of river, and whose beauty is unrivalled. A little caravan of camel-drivers speedily approached us. I learned from these people a new way of baking bread. Certain of the travellers commence by making dough, and, though destitute of ovens, they succeed in making bread, and which they are very expeditious in preparing. The paste being made and diligently kneaded, a little piece is taken, which they flatten with the hand; they spread it on an iron plate, and under this they place some burning coals. When the cake is baked on one side, they lay it on the other. This bread is very pliable, and bends what way you wish. Meat, cheese, and eggs can be readily wrapped up in it. These cakes are employed instead of plates or dishes, and they even wipe their hands in them for want of towels. You consider this as monstrous; in France it would excite disgust, but I assure you in a caravan it is perfectly excellent. Though living with Armenian merchants, the viands I consumed were of little better quality, yet we frequently confessed, while discussing such victuals, that their flavour was delightful. The broken bread is gathered when a meal is done. A species of milk which they designated *laban*, is purchased on the first occasion; 'tis diluted in a vessel (which is tinned inside,) with a quantity of water, which is equal to the milk; the greasy bits of bread, more than half of which are mouldy, are mingled with the milk: this constitutes a most refreshing potage, which is eaten with an appetite that is only seen

in caravans—so true it is, that hunger is the best of sauces. Rice is never boiled in broth, 'tis seethed in boiling water till it swells; this water is withdrawn as soon as it is sodden. When butter, oil, or grease is poured upon the rice, they put it by to soak with a slice or two of onion, when it makes a most delicious dish which glories in the name of *pilau*. It appears upon the tables of the nobles of the land, and even on the table of the Grand Signior, but it is seasoned with more delicacy I suspect, and the process is more clean than ours in the caravan, but it cannot be consumed with greater pleasure, or eaten with a more indefatigable appetite. Do you not consider this a little sensual?

We came to Balmamont upon the twelfth day, a rich timar or military benefice belonging to the favorite of the Grand Signior. Here we found a fine meadow and abundant water, and here we continued the succeeding day, and the field was submitted to our animals' discretion, at somewhat like a penny for each mule. We came to a village on the sixteenth day, called Capicadoukam, in which four or five robbers were impalled; such another sight I have never seen, 'twas horrible! most horrible! and I shudder at its recollection, each of them was hanging on his stake with which he was skewered like a fowl. In some of them it issued at the back, while in others it protruded at the collar bone, though the bowels, and the diaphragm are broken by the stake when driven through the human sufferer; they live upon the stake two days sometimes, and 'tis said that after all, these sufferers complain of little except thirst, which is likewise said of those who expire upon the wheel.

But here we encountered a more pleasant spectacle, presented by a caravan which came from Egypt, which carried to the Grand Signior "the treasure of the birds of prey;" 'tis the title of the tribute which is annually offered by that celebrated province to the pleasures of its prince. Gazing on the cavalcade, the quantity excited my astonishment; a single individual mounted on a mule contrived to carry four or five; they stood upon his fist, his arms and his shoulders. The sangiac or paramount person of the caravan, was hidden in a palanquin and followed and preceded by his servants; a moor upon a lofty camel struck us he rode before the litter, slowly and solemnly a kettle drum or tymbal, a distinction which the nobles of the Grand Signior assume on marches, as a mark of honour.

Thence we proceeded to Ladik, which is one of the ancient Laodicees. The Greek inscriptions seen upon the walls, the columns, and the marble panels scattered here and there and overturned, prove that this city was considerable, anciently; the only thing that has conferred notoriety upon it in modern times, is the apostacy of its inhabitants. Its inhabitants were Christians forty years ago, when one fine day, or rather one miserable day, they all simultaneously agreed to renounce their religion and become Mahomedans; only two or three families continued firm in the general defection.

I saw nothing very curious in Caraponger, but now we were coming to Iconium; I was very solicitous to see a city celebrated in the Acts of the Apostles. Our caravan avoided the city of Iconium, to escape that tribute they require of Christians who sojourn in a city for a single day; we might by entering expose ourselves

besides, to some avany, as a caravan as numerous as ours would awaken the cupidity of Turkish ministers. We traversed difficult and frightful mountains and formidable vallies on the 25th, and we came to a river on the 26th, the "river of the forty passages" which we had to ford, I forget how many times ; *herkeakir* is its Turkish name, which signifies the forty passages. We afterwards went up a lofty mountain from which we descended by the opposite declivity down a melancholy naked valley, entirely overspread with rocks and stones.

After having passed the river Cydnus, to which the danger of the splendid Greek who bathed in its classic waters and the death of Frederic the emperor, have given notoriety, we came to Adana on the 28th ; 'tis a handsome city with considerable commerce, especially in wax, in silk, and cotton.

We passed the Geihoun upon the 29th, a river that was anciently the Sarus ; we descended a mountain belonging to Mount Taurus ; we encountered an antique portal which is called Caraulac Capi, in a very narrow passage at the mountain's foot ; it is one of those gates for which Cilicia is so famous, and one can never enter Syria on the land side save and except by one or other of those gates ; a fort would arrest the strongest armies if it were erected here. At a little distance from this portal we came to a river called the Payas, where the Greeks and the Maronites have each a church, the temple of the Maronites was borrowed by Armenians, who being richer than the real owners, they almost monopolised the church. We proceeded about five miles farther and encamped upon a marshy plain, very near a castle that stands upon the side of a very lofty moun-



tain which reigns along the sea ; I quitted the caravan in this place, and as it is only two leagues to Alexandretta, I reached it in the evening.

Alexandretta, which is called Scanderona by the Turks, was nothing but a heap of miserable huts about fifty years ago. Having rendered it a port to the city of Aleppo, they built upon the precincts and rendered it extensive. England, France and Venice have vice-consuls in the town, where the French have a very handsome church. This was the scene of Alexander's triumph, 'twas here that he encountered Darius, and the place owes its name to that memorable day. A fort is discerned in the country adjacent, and 'tis thought from the arms of Lorraine on the wall, that Godfrey of Bouillon was the builder. A pacha began to build a fortress here to defend himself against the pirates, as he said, but the Porte not approving of his project, he was immediately obliged to pull it down. The air is insalubrious in Alexandretta, and you scarcely can reside in it a single day without experiencing its ill effects ; many men are carried to the grave on the sixth or seventh day of their arrival, and fevers of a species unknown in Europe prey upon their frame for months together if they happen to survive the first attack, and their original complexion can never be restored. There are persons who become accustomed to the climate, but old men are never to be seen ; but so long as you sojourn in a vessel on the sea your health will continue unaffected. Pigeons are employed in this place of a kind which originally came from Bagdad, to carry our merchants' letters to Aleppo—the most ready and most rapid envoys in the universe ; in three hours they perform

the very journey, for which our cavaliers would take three days.

At night, when the caravan was passing by I rejoined it, and we rapidly advanced to Beilom, where water, wine and air and all are good. We left Antioch upon our right and encamped beside a chrystal stream, designated by the Turks Saouqsou, or cold water, and the water in reality is very gelid. After having passed the river Arefin, we arrived at a mountain on the 40th, to which celebrity was given by Simon Stylites. The mountain inheriting his name is entitled *Giabal Scheyks Se-maon* by the Turks, which means the mountain of the holy Simon. The companions of my journey, ignoring the origin of this appellative, in order to inform them I recounted the story of the saint. They listened to the story with delight, and when it was concluded, a thousand times they blessed me. You see very little learning goes extremely far in this country ; people are surprisingly ignorant on the subject of religion. I was informed by a Greek with a very serious visage, that a man after death might do penance for his sins. The proposition may appear extravagant, but the sublime of folly was the proof. “ When Judas had betrayed our Saviour, did he not proceed to hang himself ? ” “ Assuredly he did,” was my reply. “ And what was his reason do you think,” exclaimed the Greek, “ was it not with the certainty of meeting our Redeemer descending into limbo, and eliciting remission, and was it not in order to be there before him that he made so much haste in the commission of the suicide, being firmly convinced, that in this case he should go with him to glory with the saints ? But you are only half informed yet,” continued the Greek, “ for the branch of the tree on which the traitor hung, bending with his

body at our Saviour's will, Judas touched the earth, and his life was not extinguished till our Saviour's resurrection, when suddenly replete with strength and vigour, the branch resumed its original position, which speedily hung him to his heart's content." You did not anticipate such a termination ! As for me I had not a syllable to say, but I laughed I assure you, till my sides were sore.

Permit me to return to St. Simon Stylites. The place which the saint selected, is really like a furnace in the summer season. The skin was removed from my visage while only passing over it, the heat was so excessive. While cold, frost, wind, and snow prevail in all their horrors through the winter, yet in this place the saint spent four-and-twenty years on the summit of a column of so small extent that he never could extend himself upon it. Fasting for the whole year round, and never eating anything in lent ; he made a thousand inclinations daily to adore the Creator of the universe. That hundreds were converted by the saint should elicit no astonishment. He who from the summit of a pulpit such as this, should announce that the world was delusion, and that heaven is our only home, could not fail to be believed.

From this celebrated mountain we descended into vast and fertile fields, which led us to Aleppo on the thirty-fifth. It is from thence that I have the honor of assuring you, with profound respect, &c.







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